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General Assembly
Seventieth session

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10th plenary meeting
Sunday, 27 September 2015, 9 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Lykketoft .... (Denmark)

The meeting was called to order at 9.05 a.m.

High-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly

Agenda items 15 and 116 (*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

United Nations Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Federal President of the Republic of Austria.

Mr. Heinz Fischer, Federal President of the Republic of Austria, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Fischer: I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General for having convened this Summit to adopt the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). It is my great pleasure to participate in this historic meeting and to assure the Assembly of Austria's full commitment to this Summit and to the 17 specific Goals endorsed by the international community in that important document.

Our world has changed significantly since we adopted the Millennium Development Goals 15 years ago. We are faced with some old challenges and many new ones, such as rapid population growth, the depletion of natural resources, the serious effects of climate change and massive refugee flows. The question of how to ensure sustainable development for future generations has become more urgent than ever.

The year 2015 is a year for the international community to take important decisions. Three major conferences will help to shape the path to a sustainable future. The third International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Addis Ababa in July, provided us with a new global framework for financing sustainable development. The United Nations Climate Change Conference to be held in December in Paris will be critical to our collective efforts in tackling climate change. Paris can and must be a success. We need a global, comprehensive and legally binding Paris agreement that reflects the highest level of commitment from everyone to reach our 2° Celsius target. We all know that reaching an agreement will not be easy, but I can assure the Assembly that in Austria and the European Union, we will do everything we can to make the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties a success.

Today, I would like to mention the invaluable contribution of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in providing scientific data and analysis. In October, it will elect a new Bureau. I am pleased to announce that Austria has nominated Mr. Nebojša Nakićenović, an internationally renowned and respected scientist, to chair the IPCC, and I hope the Assembly will be able to support that excellent candidate.

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Now a summit has convened to adopt the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a new milestone on the road to global sustainable development. The Agenda is the outcome of nearly three years of consultations among Member States, international organizations and civil society on an unprecedented scale. Preparatory conferences, such as the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries, which Austria was pleased to host in November 2014, helped us to focus our attention on the most fragile countries.

The new 2030 Agenda provides us with a blueprint of how to achieve a better, more just world for all. The Sustainable Development Goals build on and complete the Millennium Development Goals, and they are universal and applicable to every single country. The 2030 Agenda makes one thing very clear: no one must be left behind. Austria takes that message very seriously, which is why, in addition to providing development aid to other countries, the Austrian Government has made education, the rule of law and access to justice priorities of its national work programme for the years 2013-2018, with a particular focus on youth, women, the elderly and persons with disabilities.

The 2030 Agenda presents us with the opportunity to make sustainable development a reality. To sum up, I want to reiterate Austria's commitment to the new Agenda and its successful implementation at the national, regional and international levels.

The President: I thank the Federal President of the Republic of Austria for his statement.

Mr. Heinz Fischer, Federal President of the Republic of Austria, was escorted from the rostrum.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Federative Republic of Brazil.

Ms. Dilma Rousseff, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Rousseff (*spoke in Portuguese; English text provided by the delegation*): The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) outlines the future we want. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals reaffirm the basic tenet of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, namely, that it is indeed possible to grow, include, preserve and protect. As such, the Goals are clear-cut and genuinely universal. They highlight the need for further cooperation among the peoples of the world and point towards a shared path ahead for humankind.

The innovative Agenda requires global solidarity, determination from each one of us and a commitment to confronting climate change by overcoming poverty and creating opportunities for all. We must strengthen the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change by ensuring that its principles are implemented and respected. Our obligations should be ambitious and consistent with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. The upcoming twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention, to be held in Paris, is a unique opportunity for us to build a joint common response to the global challenge of climate change.

Brazil has been making vigorous efforts to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions without compromising the social inclusion component of its social and economic development. To that end, we continue to diversify the renewable sources in our energy mix, which is among the cleanest in the world. We are currently investing in low-carbon agriculture. We have reduced deforestation in the Amazon rainforest by 82 per cent. The Assembly can rest assured that we will continue to undertake such ambitious actions.

On this occasion, I would like to announce that Brazil intends to contribute to the reduction of greenhouse emissions by eliminating 37 per cent of its emissions by 2025. Our goal is to reduce emissions by 43 per cent by 2030. May I remind the Assembly that the baseline year in both cases is 2005. In the same context, by 2030 Brazil intends to adopt measures with regard to agriculture, livestock and land use that will eliminate illegal deforestation, restore and reforest 12 million hectares, recover 15 million hectares of degraded pastures, and create 5 million hectares of integrated agricultural crop, livestock and forested area practices.

On the energy front, it is our intention to meet the following ambitious objectives. First, we intend to ensure that the share of renewable resources in the total energy mix is 45 per cent. It should be noted that the global average for such a share is just 13 per cent. For the countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, it has been no greater than 7 per cent. Secondly and thirdly on our energy agenda, we are committed to having a 66 per cent hydropower component and a 23 per cent renewable energy component — wind, solar and biomass power — in our total electricity output. Fourthly, we intend to increase by 10 per cent our electricity efficiency rate. Fifthly, we expect ethanol fuel derived from sugarcane biomass sources to provide 16 per cent of the total energy mix.

In short, the adaptation measures required to meet the challenge of climate change will be accompanied by significant changes in land use, forestry practices, livestock management, agricultural practices and energy production and consumption patterns.

With regard to Goal 13 of the Sustainable Development Goals, our stance is such that we will certainly contribute to improving the environment. Brazil is thus decisively helping to ensure that the world will be in a position to implement the recommendations made by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which has established a limit of 2° Celsius as the maximum temperature increase for this century.

Brazil is one of the few developing countries to commit to an absolute target for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. We have one of the world's largest populations and gross domestic products, and our goals and targets are just as ambitious, if not more so, than those of developed countries. Our intended national contribution takes into account mitigation and adaptation initiatives, as well as specific needs in the areas of financing, technology transfer and capacity-building. It includes actions that increase the resilience of the environment and reduce the impact of the risks associated with the negative effects of climate change on the poor and more vulnerable sectors of the population. It puts special emphasis on gender issues and workers' rights, as well as on Maroon, indigenous and other traditional communities. We also recognize the importance of South-South cooperation in global efforts to combat climate change.

We must underscore that the social and inclusive aspects of these efforts are essential to their success. Since 2003, social policies and cash transfer programmes have helped lift more than 36 million Brazilians out of extreme poverty. Last year, Brazil was taken off the World Hunger Map. I should note that we were able to achieve that status thanks to our zero-hunger programme, which has now evolved to become one of the Sustainable Development Goals. Recently, owing to a policy aimed at increasing minimum wages, the population's purchasing power has grown. We have made major social progress in areas such as housing programmes, access to basic education, public health services and gender equality. We achieved those results because we understand clearly that poverty is a multidimensional problem.

In the transition to a low-carbon economy, we believe that everyone should be able to work in decent, fair conditions. Sustainable development requires that all of us commit to ensuring dignified conditions, the creation of good jobs and opportunities and equal access to education and health care. Even if we face difficulties, Brazil will not cut back on its social progress. That is the future we want and that we are all working to build. Our efforts to eradicate poverty and promote development must be collective and global in scope, hence the importance of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. In my country, we have learned one lesson very well, which is that the end of extreme poverty is only the start of a long journey.

The President: I thank the President of the Federative Republic of Brazil for her statement.

Ms. Dilma Rousseff, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, was escorted from the rostrum.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Constitutional President of the Republic of Ecuador.

Mr. Rafael Correa, Constitutional President of the Republic of Ecuador, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Correa (*spoke in Spanish*): Ecuador will meet the 21 targets of the 8 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). So far we have met 20 of them, some ahead of time and to a higher standard than was originally agreed on. The target we are still working on is the reduction of maternal mortality by at least 75 per cent. To date, we have achieved a reduction of 68 per cent, and we are implementing a specific strategy to meet the target this year. Those results have been made possible by an unprecedented public investment, one of the highest in Latin America and the Caribbean, particularly in the social sector.

When my party came to power in 2007, we reaffirmed our commitment to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), but not without questioning the way they were conceived. Eight years ago, in the General Assembly at its sixty-second session (see A/62/PV.7), I warned about the limitations of the underlying concept, since it was based on minimum principles that did not grapple with the profound social and economic asymmetries of our world. We in Ecuador felt that subscribing exclusively to a set of minimums was very risky. The MDGs were sufficient to satisfy consciences, but limited in their ability to generate genuine social change.

Overcoming poverty is a moral imperative for humankind because, for the first time in history, it results not from a scarcity of resources but from perverse and exclusionary systems. The best strategy for reducing poverty is reducing social, economic, territorial, environmental and cultural gaps. That is why we are very pleased that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) stresses specific targets aimed at achieving equitability in all those aspects — social, economic, gender, ethnic and territorial. All of that implies better income and wealth distribution within and among societies, as well as the elimination of illegitimate ways of accumulating wealth, such as unfair inheritance laws, land speculation, unexploited capital and profits derived from damage to the environment.

Development of public policies in a country that attempts radical change, such as Ecuador, cannot be limited to minimum goals, because we would run the risk of adopting the view that human life is simply a process of resistance, with the goal of extending people's lives by a few hours. Therefore, we proposed shared goals concerning not only minimum requirements for life but social maximums. A perspective based on minimum goals would legitimize our current reality and would not seek to bridge the gaps or the power relationships among people nor among societies. At best, minimum goals should be seen as a start and a temporary objective, and never as an ongoing modus operandi of public policy, since that puts the beneficiaries in a position of inferiority to the rest.

In Ecuador, what we understand by development is achieving well-being for all in peace and in harmony with nature and the continued preservation of human cultures. In that regard, we are particularly pleased that in the Sustainable Development Goals there is heavy emphasis on preserving our planet. Ecuador is the only country in the world that grants rights to nature. We are talking not just about addressing the environmental degradation of the Earth, but about introducing a new economic logic in which the creation of environmental value and environmental public goods, not just commercial ones, is rewarded. We must create alternative forms of development rather than alternatives to development. We must build societies that work with the market rather than being owned by the market. We must proceed based on the realization that the dominant forms of production and consumption, which ignore the limits of our ecosystem and seek endless growth and accumulation, are not viable. What we need is for the major countries to spend less time on diagnosing our underdevelopment and more on questioning their own model of development.

That is why we are also very pleased to see that many of the new Goals — six altogether — are associated with care for our planet, the only one we have. The well-being we promote also implies the expansion of the real freedoms, opportunities and potentials of individuals. In that regard, the immoral paradox that, on the one hand, we advocate for the free circulation of goods and capital in search of maximum profit, while, on the other hand, we punish the free circulation of persons in search of dignified work, becomes simply unacceptable and unsustainable from an ethical standpoint.

To the Government of Ecuador, there are no illegal human beings, and the United Nations should insist on that point. The migration policies of the wealthy nations are frankly shameful. We need an agenda with a focus on rights, one in which human mobility is not criminalized and people are not deprived of their fundamental rights. The absence in the 2030 Agenda of a specific goal on the free movement of persons is a regrettable omission. We need an agenda that lends its ear to the words of the young poet Warsan Shire: no one puts their children in a boat unless water is safer than land.

We place our hopes, dear friends of the whole world, in a development agenda in which the sense of humanity prevails over the rule of capital. Otherwise, we will simply continue to affirm goals and targets when what we need is to renew our entire compact as a civilization.

The President: I thank the Constitutional President of the Republic of Ecuador for his statement.

Mr. Rafael Correa, Constitutional President of the Republic of Ecuador, was escorted from the rostrum.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr. Dragan Čović, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Čović (*spoke in Bosnian; English text provided by the delegation*): It is a great honour for me to address this historic Summit, which is devoted to issues that are crucial for both the present moment and the future of all the inhabitants of our planet. United by our strong belief in the values enshrined in the Organization's founding Charter, we have committed ourselves to giving full life and new meaning to the vision of a just and sustainable world free from poverty, fear and all forms of oppression.

In our lifetime, we have witnessed achievements beyond anything our ancestors could have imagined. Extraordinary technological progress has propelled our economies and our societies. Progress in reducing hunger has been slow and uneven, but the results to date give us reason to hope that the scourge of hunger can be eliminated in our lifetime. Average life expectancy has more than doubled over the past century, and we can proudly say that more children than ever are exactly where they belong — in classrooms. Yet, we should be seriously troubled that we have inflicted so much damage on both the planet and ourselves during the past decades.

The most serious threats facing our world today are unfortunately all too well known: poverty, unemployment, natural disasters, violence and terrorism. Day after day, new reports of unspeakable human suffering from a number of conflict areas, including an immense refugee crisis, demand our urgent and meaningful response. A rapid and united effort is required to address all those threats, along with stronger determination to redress the consequences of our past mistakes and wrongdoings. We should build our approach on the positive experiences and lessons learned, in order to achieve the comprehensive and ambitious 2030 Agenda. for Sustainable Developmebnt (resolution 70/1).

The strongest message we should send at this historical moment is our renewed sense of responsibility and our resolve to act together with all stakeholders. Such an inclusive Agenda is a guarantee that no one will be left behind. To that end, an appropriate balance must be struck across the economic, social and environmental spheres. Effective and integrated solutions are possible only through a systems-based approach across all three dimensions of sustainable development. We see no way to achieve sustainable development in the true sense of the words except through a positive and constant change.

The world 15 years from now can and should be a place of universal respect for human rights. We must continue working to advance the role of women and their full engagement in the development of our societies, especially in decision-making processes. Bosnia and Herzegovina remains committed to the protection and promotion of human rights and respect for the fundamental freedoms of all, without distinction, as reflected in the Summit outcome document.

The past five years have demonstrated to the people of my country the true meaning of climate change, which is not only and exclusively about different weather conditions. In reality, it is more about not producing any food during dry years and people being forced to leave their homes during floods. It is about the scarcity of clean, safe, potable water, a commodity and luxury in times of droughts and floods.

That is why, along with millions of people around the world, we are putting our faith in the forthcoming session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Paris in December. We must believe that the outcome of that session will deliver the progress we so urgently need. Therefore, we call upon the parties to the Convention to redouble their efforts to reach a legally binding and universal climate change agreement.

There is without a doubt a strong relationship linking peace, stability and sustainable development. Bosnia and Herzegovina will continue to work with our neighbours and international partners, in an atmosphere of mutual respect and tolerance, to take proactive, strategic steps to strengthen peace, stability and prosperity in our region. In that regard, I can assure the Assembly of my country's strong support for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Our own dedication to fostering sustainable, effective and steady economic growth and, through functional democratic institutions, to build a just social environment is endorsed in the Bosnia and Herzegovina 2015-2018 reform agenda that we recently adopted.

Even the best strategies sometimes fail to produce the desired outcome if not supported by equally credible means of implementation. Investment in educational, institutional, technological and human capacities is therefore of paramount importance for many developing countries, including Bosnia and Herzegovina. Developing, implementing and monitoring our national strategies must include resources and efforts from all stakeholders - parliamentarians, academia, civil society and the private sector.

Almost all the troubles we face today recognize no borders. Neither should solidarity in our world. As we see it, solidarity should combine responsibility and respect for national ownership of development, on the one hand, and readiness to provide assistance, on the other.

An enhanced global partnership for sustainable development must be a genuine global platform for the exchange of best practices in finance, trade, technology and capacity-building. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda, in its comprehensiveness, has provided us with a strong foundation for revitalization and for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As a first step, we should undoubtedly start with what is today openly recognized as our unfinished business: the full realization of all the Millennium Development Goals. We should keep our promises.

Today, our people not only look up to us. They believe that the world can still change for the better. Equality, prosperity, dignity and security for every human being are what future generations need from us, and I am convinced that we can — and must — deliver them.

The President: I thank the Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina for his statement.

Mr. Dragan Čović, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, was escorted from the rostrum.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

Mr. Nicolás Maduro Moros, President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Maduro Moros (*spoke in Spanish*): We are witnessing the signs of a new era for humankind. The United Nations system is marking its seventieth anniversary since it began its effort to heal the deep wounds of the most destructive war that humankind has ever known. The Second World War left its physical traces on millions of women and men, as well as deep moral traces — the marks of the struggle against fascism and Nazism and their various manifestations of contempt for the human essence and the diverse forms of human culture and civilization. Seventy years ago, humankind began to build a system to come together and, as Pope Francis said just days ago from this very rostrum (see A/70/PV.3), to map a path towards the construction of our common home, the common home of humankind.

We are approaching the end of this Summit, convened to set the goals shared by our countries, peoples and Governments for social development, a Summit whose core purpose is to review the Millennium Development Goals and define the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. I would like to congratulate all the delegations on their work of many months evaluating the Goals for 2000 to 2015, and to acknowledge their success in integrating proposals from various countries and Governments with their various visions to arrive at what we have just adopted, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1).

In Venezuela's view, the 2030 Agenda is one for the development of a world of equals and is designed to eradicate the inequalities that are the mother and the source of all misery and poverty, of discardable cultures, as Pope Francis said in his visit to Cuba and the United States. Poverty is the child of the inequality imposed by systems of domination that for centuries enveloped our planet, tore Africa apart and imposed colonialism and slavery. Inequality is the child of all the forms of domination, exclusion and exploitation that devastated the aboriginal and primeval cultures that, to our great pride, are represented in our America today by our brother Evo Morales Ayma.

Inequality is the mother of all misery and poverty. If we wish to set lofty goals, as we are doing, and if we wish to meet the lofty goals we have set ourselves — the 17 Goals and 169 targets defined by our delegations and now established bu us, aimed at making progress on such major issues as overcoming poverty, establishing inclusive, free and high-quality public education, universal health care, the right to housing and a clean environment, that is, respect for Mother Earth — if we wish to advance the cause of the lofty Goals and targets we have set, there can be no doubt that the world must plan on building different economic and social models and a different model for power relationships over the next 15 years.

There is no other way. That is what we say in Venezuela, where over the past 15 years of the Millennium Development Goals we have lived through one of the most beautiful, profound and significant processes in our history, in which, together with our brothers in Latin America and the Caribbean, we have undergone an awakening, a reinvigoration of the struggle fought in the past by the poor, the forgotten and the wretched of the Earth. In the years between 2000 and 2015, Venezuela accomplished an economic, social and political revolution, the Bolivarian revolution, inspired by the original, fundamental cause of our liberator Simón Bolívar and designed, directed and led by our unforgettable leader, Hugo Chávez Frías.

The first step was regaining our political independence, the capacity to make decisions about our national affairs and plan how to invest our national wealth. The second was recovering our natural resources, particularly the wealth generated by Venezuelan oil, through the nationalization and sovereign management of the basic resources produced on our land — in this case, oil. The third step was constitutionally reinstating our people's fundamental rights, which for decades had been denied them by the domestic systems of oppression that corresponded to the systems of oppression of world Powers outside our country.

That path taken by our people, we humbly say today at this Summit, a path that marked a profound and genuine revolution, has put us in a position to begin to construct and put into practice a system of redistribution of wealth and to re-establish the elements of economic and social equality and equal access to wealth. From the very beginning of the Bolivarian revolution, our leader Hugo Chávez said that if we wished to overcome poverty, we must give power to the poor and power to the people. And when we speak of power, we mean national power first of all. When we speak of power, we mean power for the citizens and the humble: social, economic and civic power. We mean empowering the people so that they themselves can take charge of building their own happiness and overcoming their own situation.

Today, Venezuela can actually present a satisfactory record — a positive balance sheet — to the General Assembly. Today, Venezuela can say that the immense wealth of our country has been distributed through our investment in education, housing, health care, the right to food and the right to life.

We have managed to reverse the exclusionary trends of capitalist throwaway culture, to paraphrase Pope Francis. Whereas in the past we invested barely 33 per cent of the national income or national wealth, today Venezuela invests 62 per cent of its national wealth in the development of our people, in promoting equality and reducing poverty and extreme poverty, with the resulting indices showing significant improvements in education, health care, employment and labour remuneration.

We have managed to reverse the trends towards deregulating labour conditions for workers and creating precarious employment that exploits workers, especially the youngest workers. The right to stable and decent work, as proclaimed in various United Nations system instruments, or what we call the right to fair and egalitarian work, is a fundamental right if we want the goal to be our peoples' proactively overcoming their difficulties and lifting themselves out of poverty and extreme poverty.

We have fully and wholeheartedly adopted the 17 Goals proposed for the years 2015 to 2030. The 17 Goals are designed to eradicate poverty, put an end to hunger, ensure health care, guarantee a quality education, attain gender equality, guarantee the availability and sustainable management of water, and ensure access to energy on a fair basis, as we are currently doing through the special inclusive projects based on solidarity and brotherhood under the auspices of Petrocaribe. Petrocaribe is sponsoring joint projects to provide 18 Caribbean States with genuine access to energy, an undertaking that I deem worthy of study by the committees that will follow up on the Agenda.

The Agenda is a set of 17 Goals designed to foster equitable economic growth and the transformation of an economic model, as provided for in Goal 8. Without the transformation of the unfair, single-vision economic model that attempts to impose political and social conditions that are unacceptable for our peoples — a model imposed by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank on our countries — it will be impossible to work towards and attain the desired, lofty, necessary and just Goals for 2015-2030. Only after a profound transformation of the economic system and a total and absolute change of the system imposed by the one-track, neoliberal thinking that the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank espouse will the Goals and targets for poverty eradication and universal social happiness proposed today be economically viable and sustainable.

The year 2030 is a target date that must bind us all. After reviewing the history of the past 15 years, and of the 70 years of the United Nations system, and the great challenges and serious problems faced by humankind during those years, we can be sure that the next 15 years will bring great challenges as we seek to consolidate world peace, strengthen new, fair, equitable, equality-based, inclusive — and non-exclusionary — economic relations and construct social and technological models that will allow our peoples to gain access to rights that today are denied to over 1.2 billion poor people. These are important topics that the United Nations will have to address. While it is true that for the attainment of these social goals a new economic model becomes necessary and new ways of creating equality must be considered, it is also true — or so we believe in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela — that a system of guarantees to safeguard peace and sovereignty for our peoples is also necessary.

It is worth taking a look at the tragedies being endured today by the Arab peoples and our brothers and sisters in Africa and Asia, as well as at the most tragic and painful mass migration in the last 70 years that is playing out in the Mediterranean and European countries. Why is there such mass migration if it is not a flight from misery and pain? There is only one cause: unfair wars of aggression that are aimed at conquering entire nations. A review of the 15 years in which the Millennium Development Goals have been in place raises the question, why is that region of the world living a horror movie? It seems that millions of Muslim Arab brothers and sisters in the Middle East are looking for a shred of peace, a beacon of hope. The specific concrete cause that has had a negative impact on these fraternal peoples of Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria is none other than unfair imperialist wars, the attempt to control the world by a single hegemonic Power that wants to dominate people.

We must put an end to unfair systems and imperialist wars so that there can be truly humane conditions for moving forward to attain the lofty objectives that humankind has been able to identify and build during the 70 years of existence of the United Nations system. As Pope Francis said to a full house, and was greeted by heartfelt applause by the representatives of all cultures and peoples, if we wish to have a shared house by 2030 — and we in Venezuela have that dream and will struggle indefatigably to make it come true — we need to have a shared house without imperialist wars, without wars of destruction, without racism, without xenophobia, without contempt and without inequality. We must think about a common cause uniting peoples whose relations are based on respect for international law and peoples who are committed to the 2030 Agenda because they see it as a great human agenda for building peace, happiness and universal justice.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela expresses its happiness with, and its intention to abide by, the 2030 Agenda.

The President: I thank the President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for his statement.

Mr. Nicolás Maduro Moros, President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, was escorted from the rostrum.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Serbia.

Mr. Tomislav Nikolić, President of the Republic of Serbia, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Nikolić (*spoke in Serbian; English text provided by the delegation*): Here at the Headquarters of the United Nations, during this Summit, we have adopted an ambitious transformational agenda, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), with Goals and targets intended to substantively change our civilization for the better during the next 15 years. A difficult and unprecedented task lies ahead of us: eradicating poverty — particularly extreme poverty — by 2030 and laying the foundations for maintaining the sustainable development of our planet for the benefit of future generations.

The positive results of the Millennium Development Goals — such as the reduction by half of the percentage of people living in extreme poverty, which we achieved ahead of time — led us to believe that the transformation of our world is possible. In the twenty-first century, we live an era of tremendous technological achievements, which for the first time in human history provide a realistic opportunity for not simply each country but each individual to achieve sustainable development. No one should be left behind or forgotten.

For more than two years, our diplomats and our civil societies, private business sectors and academia negotiated a new set of proposals formulated in the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2030. They are comprehensive and touch upon almost all elements of economic, social and environmental development. These universal Goals apply to all countries, rich and poor, with particular concern for the sizable part of the population living in extreme poverty on as little as $1.25 a day.

Our generation has a moral obligation to create in today's world conditions in which no one goes hungry, gender equality prevails and women and girls are empowered. We must end the harmful effects of the warming of our planet, which is threatened by large-scale climate change. All too often an alarm bell rings, and all too often we experience natural disasters, droughts and floods, such as those that, with tragic consequences, struck my country and the region hard a year ago.

It was not easy to reach consensus on the new global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Yet we all share this planet of ours. Not only do we have no other home to go to, but we have the duty to do everything we can to preserve it and to ensure sustainable development, including for the most vulnerable among us.

Of course, the key question is how to effectively implement such an ambitious Agenda. In July, at the third International Conference on Financing for Development, we reached consensus on sustainable development financing modalities through the adoption of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. We agreed on the need to mobilize all financial resources — public, private, domestic, international and miscellaneous. We agreed to fulfil the obligation to commit 0.7 per cent of gross national income to official development assistance, and 0.15 per cent to 0.20 per cent of that amount to the least developed countries. Technology transfer, indebtedness and reaching trade agreements were also high on the Conference agenda. We reaffirmed the principle that every country has the primary responsibility for its own development and that it must create conditions for progress and prosperity through good governance and the rule of law, combating corruption and halting illegal financial flows.

Mr. Rafael Correa (Ecuador), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Serbia actively participated in the formulation of the global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The negotiations in the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, of which my country was a member, were kick-started when a Serbian was the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session. Serbia also took part in the work of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing.

As a middle-income, landlocked country in transition, Serbia still shoulders the heavy burden of caring for a large number of refugees and persons displaced in and after the conflicts in our region, while coping with the development problems that many other countries face. The dramatic and uncontrolled influx of migrants — who in tens of thousands transit Serbia in search of shelter and a better life and who wait for days to cross the border into the European Union — is a challenge that we must all address together if we are to achieve a solution.

Serbia firmly believes that development is not possible without peace and stability. We strongly support Goal 16, on peaceful and inclusive societies, and in that context we believe in investing continued efforts in developing good neighbourly relations in the region. That is because the process of reconciliation and cooperation has no alternative.

As in other countries of the region, the unemployment rate in Serbia continues to be high, especially for young people, and the rate of economic growth is low. As in many other countries, the economic recession has spiralled upward since the onset of the global financial crisis. In cooperation with the International Monetary Fund and with its support, we have made considerable efforts towards fiscal consolidation. With painful cuts across the board, we have managed to reduce Serbia's fiscal deficit from 7 per cent to its current level of approximately 3 per cent. We expect that this year the gross national product will begin to grow.

As a European Union candidate country, Serbia has harmonized its legislative system with the European Union's body of law and has taken important steps to reform its economy, rebuild its infrastructure, tap into sustainable energy resources and tackle environmental problems. We fully understand that success in attaining sustainable development is not possible without all-round regional cooperation. We shall therefore hold consultations in Belgrade later this year to discuss with our regional partners how to work together in implementing the Agenda.

We have embarked upon an ambitious and unprecedented project. Failure must not, and cannot, be an option. Our generation has a historic opportunity to set our civilization on the course towards achieving sustainable development, prosperity and peace, and I trust that that opportunity will not be ignored.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the President of the Republic of Serbia for his statement.

Mr. Tomislav Nikolić, President of the Republic of Serbia, was escorted from the rostrum.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Tajikistan.

Mr. Emomali Rahmon, President of the Republic of Tajikistan, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Rahmon (*spoke in Tajik; English text provided by the delegation*): This year is the final year for the implementation of the 2015 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The lessons learned during their implementation were used as a basis for the post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda. The Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals played an important role in the process and, over the past two years, managed to identify and agree on 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to be achieved by 2030.

We will soon begin to implement the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). We will do so against the background and increasing impact of such global threats and challenges as international terrorism and extremism, illicit drug trafficking, transnational organized crime, armed conflicts and financial, economic, food and energy crises, together with the degradation of natural resources and climate change, natural and human-caused disasters and infectious diseases, all of which seriously undermine security and stability in the world and can slow the achievement of sustainable development.

In that regard, we believe that the international community should bolster its efforts to create a global environment that is conducive to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The new Agenda is unique because it lays down the specific Goals and targets for sustainable development in its three key dimensions — economic, social and environmental — in a balanced and integrated manner. We are convinced that the Sustainable Development Goals aimed at addressing poverty eradication, ensuring food security, improving health care and education, ensuring the sustainable use of water resources, improving access to cost-effective and reliable energy sources, the establishment of advanced infrastructure, the adoption of urgent measures to combat climate change and its impact, the reduction of inequality among countries and the achievement of gender equality on a global scale are a logical continuation of the Millennium Development Goals.

As a pilot country for the implementation of the MDGs, Tajikistan attaches great importance to the process of improving the previous MDG agenda and realizing the new post-2015 development agenda. The Republic of Tajikistan participated actively in developing and coordinating the global development agenda beyond 2015 by taking an active part in and contributing to the global dialogue. Our Government held a number of national consultations aimed at reflecting the aspirations of a wide spectrum of the population concerning the future they want. The Government of Tajikistan is currently developing its new national development strategy 2030 and the mid-term development programme for the period 2016-2020, which outline the priority areas for the country's sustainable development and will take into account, where possible, the targets identified by the Sustainable Development Goals. In that regard, the United Nations country programme action plan for Tajikistan for 2016-2020 will be particularly useful.

The primary objective of both the programme and the strategy being developed is to improve the well-being of the country's population through sustainable social and economic development. In order to successfully address the set of complex social, economic and environmental issues within the framework of the country's 2030 national development strategy, we have identified the importance of setting strategic goals —, such as ensuring energy security, breaking communication deadlocks and ensuring food security — without which the implementation of the SDGs would be rather difficult.

To achieve those goals, we need to implement a number of projects at the national, regional and global levels. The priority areas are more efficient use of natural resources and human capital, the diversification of the national economy to enhance its competitiveness, the development of the country's institutions, the strengthening of the middle class and the achievement of equal levels of development in all regions of the country.

In order to successfully implement those targets, it is essential to mobilize the necessary resources. That remains a challenge because of the ever-changing dynamics of international relations and the emerging crises in various regions of the world. In that context, increases in official development assistance, which forms an important component of financing for development, remains critical. Under the current circumstances, it is crucial to facilitate international trade and investment, which are the main engines of productive growth, and to encourage and promote the transfer of innovative and environmentally friendly technologies.

It is obvious that the path towards sustainable development is not going to be easy or smooth. For that reason, it is important that we show determination and lend a hand to those countries facing the most difficulties. It should be remembered that a number of countries will start implementing the new Agenda for Sustainable Development in less than favourable conditions. There is a need to support countries in specific situations, in particular the countries with mountainous and inaccessible terrain and landlocked developing countries.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that Tajikistan will continue to actively cooperate with the international community, the United Nations institutions and programmes and partner countries and organizations interested in successfully implementing the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the President of the Republic of Tajikistan for his statement.

Mr. Emomali Rahmon, President of the Republic of Tajikistan, was escorted from the rostrum.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Bulgaria.

Mr. Rosen Plevneliev, President of the Republic of Bulgaria, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Plevneliev: We have just adopted a new development agenda. The post-2015 process is a unique global effort aimed at ending poverty and achieving sustainable development for all, while protecting the planet and its resources. The United Nations and its Member States representatives of civil society and the private sector and academia all participated in the deliberation process.

Bulgaria welcomes the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). This forward-looking and ambitious new Agenda integrates the three pillars of sustainable development, thus outlining the links between poverty eradication, sustainable economic development and peaceful and stable societies. It is an impressive and transformative Agenda in many ways. For the first time in history, a document of global scale places special emphasis on the individual, leaving no one behind. The Agenda is people-centred and based on the principles of universality, inclusiveness and shared responsibilities.

During the intergovernmental negotiations, Bulgaria strongly advocated, in its national capacity and as part of the European Union, for the elaboration of a human rights-based agenda. Every effort has been made to eliminate all forms of inequality and discrimination. As one of the co-chairs of the Group of Friends of Children and Sustainable Development Goals, Bulgaria worked for the integration of children's human rights in all aspects of development policies, placing children at the heart of the Agenda. For the first time, children and youth were considered active participants in all processes that affect their lives.

The Sustainable Development Goals that we have agreed on are ambitious and need bold and determined actions to be fully implemented. Bulgaria will make every effort to implement the new Agenda and achieve its Goals of eradicating poverty, eliminating inequalities and fostering a peaceful, just and inclusive society based on the rule of law. Our country will also continue to do its best to help more vulnerable nations achieve those ambitious Goals.

The way in which the Agenda was adopted is indicative of the strong political will for its implementation. Balance was achieved between the commitments contained in the document and the means for their implementation. However, robust national and international accountability should be sought through the participation of all stakeholders, including Governments, civil society, the private sector and academia.

The adoption of the post-2015 development agenda represents a success for the international community. The implementation of the new Agenda should be guided by the principles of accountability, transparency and inclusiveness. The monitoring and review of its implementation should be based on a well-defined set of global indicators, as well as on the timely collection of disaggregated data. We welcome the ongoing work on the part of the United Nations Statistical Commission in that regard.

The decisions that we make today will affect all of us over the next 15 years. The Agenda is a joint and consensual effort and is, at this point, the only viable solution that we have for dealing with the challenges we face. And we need to deliver.

Bulgaria believes the focus should now be on the implementation of the new Agenda Goals, and we are fully committed to contribute to their success.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the President of the Republic of Bulgaria for his statement.

Mr. Rosen Plevneliev, President of the Republic of Bulgaria, was escorted from the rostrum.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of South Africa.

Mr. Jacob Zuma, President of the Republic of South Africa, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Zuma: Seventy years ago, at the birth of the United Nations, the drafters of the Charter of the United Nations pledged in the Preamble "To promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom". The objective was to save future generations from the scourge of war through the eradication of poverty and the promotion of an improved quality of life for all the peoples of the world, especially the poor.

The world was very different then from what it is today. Many members of the current Group of 77 and China were in fact not free then and were living under foreign and colonial occupation. In the past 70 years, the world has seen many developments, including decolonization and the ushering in of freedom and self-determination, and the establishment of new, free and independent nations.

However, despite such progress, the world has still not adequately addressed underdevelopment, inequality, increasing poverty and economic exclusion. Fifteen years ago, the Millennium Declaration (resolution 55/2) was adopted. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) became a clarion call for directing and promoting global socioeconomic development and for lifting millions of people out of poverty throughout the world. The Secretary-General's most recent report on the MDGs, *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2015*, indicates that the number of people living in extreme poverty has declined significantly. Progress has been recorded in reaching some of the MDGs.

In my own country, South Africa, there has been a huge increase in a number of areas, such as education, health and gender equality. Primary-school enrolment, including the participation of girls, has increased. Child and maternal mortality rates have shown a decline. Targeted interventions in fighting diseases, such as human-immunodeficiency virus infections and acquired immune deficiency syndrome, have also saved thousands of lives.

The achievement of the MDGs has been uneven across geographical regions, with regions such as Africa lagging behind, owing to historical reasons based on underdevelopment. That is the context in which we have adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) on this historic seventieth anniversary of the United Nations.

The Goals and targets in the new Agenda cover all three dimensions of sustainable development and enable us to continue seamlessly from the MDGs. They range from ending poverty, ensuring healthy lives, ensuring inclusive and equitable high-quality education, achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls to conserving and sustainably using the oceans and addressing climate change. South Africa endorses this transformative post-2015 development agenda without any reservations.

The triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality, which the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development seeks to address, are the primary focus of the South African Government and people. The Sustainable Development Goals are also in line with South Africa's national development plan as well as the African Union's Agenda 2063. More important, the outcome document of the post-2015 development negotiations at the United Nations represents a victory for developing countries, as it affirms that the 2030 Agenda should build on the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals.

In addition, while the 2030 Agenda is universal in that the Goals apply to both developed and developing countries, there is a clear recognition of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. That takes into account the different national realities, capacities and levels of development and also respects national policies and priorities.

The negotiations on the 2030 Agenda took place against the backdrop of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, recently concluded at the third International

Conference on Financing for Development, as well as the ongoing negotiations on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. While the new Agenda stands on its own, it will draw on the support of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the outcome of the negotiations at the Conference of the Parties to the Climate Change Convention, as well as on the outcomes of other multilateral meetings, both now and in the future, to achieve its objectives.

We are also pleased that the global 2030 Agenda includes a specific Goal on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls. All 17 of the Sustainable Development Goals, including those on poverty eradication, education, health, job creation and inequality, include specific references to the challenges that confront women, youth, people with disabilities and other vulnerable sectors of our society. We are also particularly pleased that the 2030 Agenda includes a stand-alone Goal on the means of implementation, which seeks to ensure that adequate attention is placed on the achievement of the substantive Goals.

Events in the recent past have demonstrated that the countries of the developed North cannot insulate themselves from the challenges facing countries of the developing South. In that regard, we welcome the commitment to the global partnership in order to ensure the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda. We call on development partners to not only meet their current commitments, but also to enhance their official development assistance (ODA) with binding timetables, given the fact that ODA remains the main source of development assistance for many developing countries. We also reiterate that climate financing is new and additional to ODA and cannot be counted as ODA, nor should it be mixed with traditional development financing.

Significant work and consultation has gone into negotiating the 2030 Agenda. We now have a document that we can confidently say reflects our global development aspirations while building on the progress made in the past 15 years. The full implementation of the 2030 Agenda will move the world forward towards the realization of the vision of social progress found in the Charter of the United Nations and better standards of life in larger freedom, as pledged at the founding of the United Nations 70 years ago.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the President of the Republic of South Africa for his statement.

Mr. Jacob Zuma, President of the Republic of South Africa, was escorted from the rostrum.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Nazarbayev (*spoke in Russian*): Kazakhstan has worked diligently to fulfil the Millennium Development Goals. Today, we can talk about what we have accomplished.

First of all, we have strengthened the foundations of governance and created the conditions for the development of civil society. Secondly, Kazakhstan's gross domestic product has grown 19-fold, and our annual per capita income has reached $13,000. Thirdly, the life expectancy of the people of the country now exceeds 70 years. The level of poverty has been reduced 11-fold — from 34 to 3 per cent. The level of infant and maternal mortality has also been reduced by 65 per cent. We have made significant progress in the fight against diseases, such as AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. Fourthly, Kazakhstan has cut its greenhouse gas emissions and focused on maintaining the biodiversity of our planet. It has also approved a national plan for the transition to a green economy.

The disappearance of the Aral Sea represents a threat not only to our region, but to the world as a whole. As a result of the drying up of that Sea, the wind picks up as much as 75 million tons of dust and poisonous deposits per annum, which have been detected in Europe and Antarctica. With the support of the World Bank, we have been able to restore the northern part of the Aral Sea. We are also working, together with the United Nations and the international community, to clean up the zone of the former Semipalatinsk nuclear test site. The countries of Central Asia are awaiting help in the fight against the ecological problems in the region.

Kazakhstan supports the comprehensive new document for the development of our planet, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which has just been adopted (resolution 70/1). The Sustainable Development Goals, as set out in the new Agenda, represent a turning point for the countries and peoples of the world. The outcome document of this Summit will become a truly global road map for development and prosperity on Earth.

The main responsibility for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals lies with national Governments. The Goals and targets of the new Agenda fully coincide with the priorities and objectives that Kazakhstan has established for the future. Our response to those modern challenges, which we have entitled the Kazakhstan 2050 Strategy, will be adopted in the country. Its aim is to make Kazakhstan one of the 30 most developed countries in the world. We are carrying out a national plan, including five institutional reforms aimed at modernizing the State apparatus, improving the work of civil and legal institutions, further industrializing our economy and fostering an open society.

The resurrection and modernization of the Silk Road economy is important for the countries of Eurasia and will benefit many countries by maintaining transit from the Asia-Pacific region to Europe. Kazakhstan is working on its infrastructure by building railways and roads that will unite the Pacific with Europe and the Middle East across Kazakhstan. Our country, which has no access to the sea, has become a transit territory and has thus gained access. The time has come for us to unite around the idea of a greater Eurasia that will unite into a single integrational twenty-first century project — the Eurasian Economic Union, the economic area of the Silk Road and the European Union.

A gap is growing in the world between the rich and the poor. However, a negative trend is being exacerbated by conflicts in the Middle East, Africa and Asia. The current migration crisis is the result not only of walls, but also of imbalances in development. In the twenty-first century, successful States will be identified not by their arsenals of weapons, but by their abilities to develop cutting-edge ideas and to lead people towards them.

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, the total military expenditure of all States in 2014 exceeded $1.7 trillion, or approximately 2.3 per cent of the global gross domestic product. Therefore, in order to guarantee the programmes that we have adopted and to ensure them the large-scale financing they need, I once again make a proposal for the annual allocation by each State of 1 per cent of its annual defence budget to the Sustainable Development Goals Fund. That would help us to fulfil the development plan we have adopted.

Mr. Alrowaiei (Bahrain), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Today, history once again gives us a chance to unite on behalf of a common bright future. The best thing we can do is to not allow the hopes of humankind to run aground on the reefs of contemporary challenges and threats. Kazakhstan is ready to make every effort and to allocate its resources towards the goal of global development.

I wish everyone every success, and prosperity to all the countries of the world.

The Acting President: I thank the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan for his statement.

Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, was escorted from the rostrum.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of Romania.

Mr. Klaus Werner Iohannis, President of Romania, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Iohannais: It gives me great pleasure to participate in this Summit, which has just adopted the programmatic document entitled "Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (resolution 70/1), in this year when the international community celebrates the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations.

The new Agenda aims to eradicate poverty in all its forms and to achieve sustainable development in its three dimensions in a balanced and integrated manner. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals and the 169 targets confirm the comprehensiveness of the new Agenda. The work ahead of us in the next 15 years will demonstrate whether all States Members of the United Nations can fully commit themselves to the achievement of the ambitious and noble aspiration to free people from the scourge of poverty.

It is our common duty to define the proper solutions for that quest at a time when science and technology are full-fledged assets with outstanding prospects for promoting economic growth. We should be aware that the measures aimed at eradicating poverty represent not only a moral commitment but also a means for promoting international peace and security.

International peace and security, a major objective of the United Nations, cannot be fully promoted without paying special attention to development. We should approach the roots of conflict, which include poverty, lack of hope, despair and social exclusion. Poverty can lead to despair and frustration, which can serve as the seeds of extremism and violence. At the same time, peace and security, at the international and the national levels, are the major prerequisites for sustainable development.

As we saw in the past month, hundreds of thousands of people fleeing war and searching for a better life have crossed into Europe, often by risky means. That ever-increasing influx of migrants from the Middle East and Africa has left European countries struggling to cope with a growing humanitarian disaster. That crisis is complex and has humanitarian aspects, as well as leading to further crises in the border protection, integration and financial areas. If we do not find the most adequate means to address each of them, each wave of migration will be bigger than the previous one. Every nation has an obligation to rescue people and to support and protect them.

The new development Agenda goes far beyond the Millennium Development Goals, maintaining themes such as poverty eradication, education and health while introducing new ones such as the establishment of peaceful and inclusive societies. The new Agenda has a universal character, maintains a balance among the economic, environmental and social goals, addresses major means of implementation and pleads for a global partnership in its implementation.

All countries should ensure that appropriate policies are in place for implementing the Agenda. Countries should promote effective and inclusive institutions and create policies based on the rule of law, human rights, the rights of women, gender equality and the empowerment of women. National ownership and accountability are of key importance for the implementation of the Agenda, in terms of commitments and instruments such as sustainable development strategies. Each country has the primary responsibility for its own development. We fully support the idea that the new Agenda should be implemented by local institutions, responding directly to citizens' needs. Their needs, interests and concerns must be clearly addressed when local and national strategies are defined.

In the case of Romania, we will revise our national strategy on sustainable development in order to integrate the new Sustainable Development Goals. Social exclusion has been identified as a major impediment to the local implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The revised strategy will emphasize supporting the inclusion of disabled people, young people and women in development policies. Eradicating poverty requires decent employment opportunities, while social cohesion policies are needed to avoid and prevent social exclusion. We stand ready to participate in the process of reviewing and monitoring the implementation of the new Agenda, to share our experience with other Member States and to exchange lessons learned as well as positive results of the process.

The Acting President: I thank the President of Romania for his statement.

Mr. Klaus Werner Iohannis, President of Romania, was escorted from the rostrum.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Belarus.

Mr. Alyaksandr Lukashenka, President of the Republic of Belarus, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Lukashenka (*spoke in Russian*): Sustainable development is impossible without peace and security. The people of Belarus learned to fully appreciate that absolute truth through their own fate. In the past century, Belarus became a site for the bloodiest battles of two World Wars. That is why we attach the utmost importance to the prevention of military conflicts and threats to people's lives. After losing one third of its population in the struggle against fascism, Belarus rose from the ashes and now strives to preserve peace and social harmony as a sacred task, while seeking to ensure the nation's well-being and pursue sustainable development.

During the years of its sovereignty our country has honourably achieved the Millennium Development Goals related to the eradication of hunger and poverty and has ensured 100 per cent literacy in its population, along with equality between men and women, social and political stability and non-discrimination on ethnic and religious grounds. We do not have a maternal mortality problem. Infant mortality in Belarus is the lowest in the world.

What I have described is the result of true democracy, and not what Western teachers try to impose on us. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for our planet in general. Unfortunately, the world has come to this Summit as dissociated and divided as it has ever been during the past three decades. The planet is being shaken by numerous conflicts and acts of terrorism. Regrettably, no adequate solution has been found to an increasing number of global threats.

To date, we have been unable to restore the balance of power that was lost with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Without such a balance, there can be neither peace nor stability. There is a systemic crisis. In any system, a single force, if it goes unchecked, seeks prosperity only for itself at the expense of others. A policy of hegemony and national egoism leads to the widespread use of pressure, sanctions, restrictions and military action. Consequently, we are losing trust in one another. Examples of open political skulduggery, lies and crimes against humanity are all too apparent.

Let us recall some recent facts. On the pretext of the presence of nuclear weapons in Iraq, certain countries, which are well known, decided to democratize Iraq. And where were those nuclear weapons? Where is democracy now in Iraq? Why was the President of Iraq murdered? Where does that country stand today, and where is the future of the Iraqi people? Has life become better for people in that land? We can answer that it has not. Those responsible for what happened in Iraq claim that they made a mistake. They should have desisted, but once again, that was not what happened. They went even further. They began with Tunis and moved on to Libya. The scenario was exactly the same. President Al-Qadhafi was crucified and his State was destroyed. Has the situation in Libya improved? The answer again is no. And does Libya exist as a intact State?

That should have been enough, but then they went into Syria. We ask them why? Why are they killing more people? Why do they seek to overthrow a sitting President? How does he not suit them? Moreover, in facilitating the massacres in Syria, they are erasing the earliest traces of our common civilization. They should tell the world what they really want and what they are striving for.

Now, about the Ukrainian crisis. If we do not stop the bloodshed in Europe, that internecine massacre, than we will be facilitating the escalation of a conflict with dire results for the civilized world. If we take one more step towards global conflict, we might very well set off a new world war in the heart of the civilized and progressive world. Can it really be, in this new millennium, that we have yet to understand how fragile the world and human civilization are?

I say that not just to list well-known world events, but so that the powerful of the world might understand something, namely, that today there is no force that will stop them. But the Heads of State who are carrying out such blasphemy are all believers. Many of them even pray in public, but the Lord sees everything, and he is just. If he should grow wrathful and punish the guilty, then all peoples will suffer innocently because of the gambles of those leaders. I implore them to stop. We need to help the people of the poorer countries to dress themselves, to take care of themselves and obtain an education. If those leaders feed the hungry and save children from catastrophes, they will receive what is justly theirs.

But mutual alienation is typical not only of big countries, but also of small countries. There are many who do not even have the slightest desire to understand the traditions, convictions and cultures of other peoples. It is apparent that restoring a balance will take a long time in a polarized world. We will get closer to that goal only if we take action, rather than sitting and waiting passively. We need to acknowledge that, in practice, we are all different and that every nation has the right to choose its own path to development. Our diversity can ensure a common progress and everyone's success. Such an approach will help us to restore trust in our international relations, but in order to do so, we need to meet and talk to one another and look for ways for constructive interaction. And once we have reached an agreement, we will need to act.

History teaches us that anyone claiming unilateral leadership, without regard for the interests of others, is ultimately doomed to fail. Any advantage gained at the expense of others is short-lived and waning. A popular folk saying says that one cannot build one's happiness on the misfortunes of others.

Today's world is experiencing a crisis of responsibility. Self-interest and momentary advantages are at the core of many decisions. In the international arena, the actions of a number of States often fail to take into account the specific realities and particularities of other countries and societies. I am confident that with a different approach, we would not have seen hundreds of thousands of victims in Iraq, Libya, Syria and other countries, from which refugees are fleeing in an attempt to escape war. There would have been no Islamic State, no acts of terror in Europe nor civil war in Ukraine. The list of such "would not have beens" could be quite long.

It is important to speak of this today, because otherwise these countries, these peoples, will not understand us when we talk about development, given that millions if not billions of people lack access to the conditions that would allow them to live from one day to the next. Today, we need responsible politicians, capable of acting globally and strategically, willing to make decisions in the interest of the entire international community, as well as compromises for the common good.

While at the United Nations, I cannot help but mention the crisis affecting international institutions. In recent years, one has gained the impression that their role has been reduced to that of a mere venue for disputes among States or for pressuring individual countries that do not please the powerful of this world. We need only look at the multitude of resolutions adopted at the United Nations. Does voting on them help solve conflicts? Does that voting help unite the international community? Do those resolutions improve people's lives? Let us give an honest answer: no. After taking a vote, we return to being separated into our different camps. As a result, there is even more mistrust and disengagement.

I am deeply convinced that the United Nations should not be used to demonstrate one's power. That behaviour weakens the Organization, destroys confidence in it and runs contrary to its very nature and mission. It is hardly surprising that traditional international organizations have played an insufficient role in preventing and settling conflicts. We must put an end to such deplorable practices. The United Nations must be a forum for cooperation among States, not one for confrontation.

Only mutual understanding and responsibility, an awareness of the diversity of the world community and the renewal of trust will help us unite in safeguarding peace and security and ensure that we can find effective responses to global challenges and threats. The sustainable development of all countries and a broadening of the role of the United Nations will be the practical result of our common efforts and of the consolidation of the Organization's role in global politics.

The Acting President: I thank the President of the Republic of Belarus for his statement.

Mr. Alyaksandr Lukashenka, President of the Republic of Belarus, was escorted from the rostrum.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

Mr. Maithripala Sirisena, President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Sirisena (*spoke in Sinhalese; English text provided by the delegation*): Since its inception, the United Nations has always striven to make human life more rational, meaningful and prosperous. As world leaders, it is our responsibility and duty to build such a world.

The Government of Sri Lanka fully supports the post-2015 sustainable development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals and targets that the Assembly has just adopted in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). Accordingly, I declare that the Government of Sri Lanka will act with determination as a pioneer of the eco-sensitive civilization that is emerging in the twenty-first century.

Sustainable development encapsulates the equilibrium between social and economic development and environmental protection. The Government of Sri Lanka anticipates achieving those Goals fully by 2030. We will work to meet the basic needs of the people, progressively alleviate poverty, eliminate all forms of discrimination and inequality and establish a society based on social justice and human security. At the same time, while emphasizing the protection of our natural resources, we will also formulate a State policy on resource consumption based on environmental sustainability. We will strive to ensure that the relevant policy framework is implemented within an institutional structure based on the principles of good governance espoused by my Government. Special attention will also be given to the concept of environmental good governance as an integral part of our governance policies. We will ensure that civil society and the business sector, as well the State sector, participate in those efforts.

Sustainable development cannot be achieved by a single country alone. Our strategy will therefore envisage a framework for cooperation among the United Nations, regional organizations and other States.

Sri Lanka will be fully committed to dealing with Sustainable Development Goal 13, relating to climate change. We will strive to minimize the risks of possible environmental hazards. I firmly believe that a proper study is required to ascertain how climate change aggravates Sri Lanka's contemporary development challenges, such as poverty alleviation, food security, a growing elderly population and natural disasters.

I wish to affirm that, in the preparation of development policies for Sri Lanka as an aspiring upper-middle income country, our special attention is focused on Sustainable Development Goal 1, poverty alleviation; Goal 2, achieving food security; Goal 7, energy; Goal 4, education; Goal 10, minimizing income disparity, and Goal 11, urban development. Sri Lanka's rich history, dating back beyond 2,500 years, provides us with inspiration and strength in that endeavour.

I would like to conclude with the English translation of an ancient Pali blessing that also accompanies the preamble to the Constitution of Sri Lanka: "May the rains fall in due season" — signifying environmental balance; "may the harvest be bountiful" — signifying economic prosperity; "may the world prosper" and "may the ruler be righteous" — signifying good governance. That shows that, even centuries ago, our ancestors possessed the wisdom and awareness of the sustainable development triangle. As inheritors of that traditional knowledge and influenced by its ancient wisdom, which it will adapt to meet the requirements of the modern era, Sri Lanka stands prepared to meet the challenges successfully and march forward gloriously into the twenty-first century. May the Noble Triple Gem bless you!

The Acting President: I thank the President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka for his statement.

Mr. Maithripala Sirisena, President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, was escorted from the rostrum.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Malta.

Ms. Marie Louise Coleiro Preca, President of the Republic of Malta, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Coleiro Preca: We come together at a critical moment in our history, a moment that calls more than ever for global solidarity, having undertaken a huge commitment to safeguarding human dignity and human rights. This is a moment when we must believe that we are capable of challenging the boundaries imposed by dogmatic conventions and narrowness of thought. We must believe and manifest the growing commitment felt so keenly across our nations to building and sustaining inclusive communities. We must find ways of ensuring that meaningful dialogue and shared understanding among peoples of diverse cultures will enrich and support our commitment.

This is a moment in which to be mindful of the far-reaching and often insidious effects of inequality. The cycle of power, privilege and oppression constrains opportunities, restricts development and limits self-determination for millions of people around the globe. We must interrupt those processes and work for social justice in the knowledge that such systems of inequality can never define the human person. Stories of inequality flood our media every day. We hear stories of people denied their most fundamental rights. We hear stories of individuals and groups facing discrimination, stories of extreme poverty and of people suffering from the effects of climate change, and stories of the vulnerable, exploited and abused.

The precariousness of the world calls for us to make a greater effort to address those inequalities, which continue to hinder our progress. But how can we talk about progress without talking about the women, girls and gender minorities who continue to face a multitude of inequalities on a daily basis? How can we talk about sustainability without addressing the millions of people facing poverty? How can we talk of inclusiveness without reaching out beyond the safety of our centres of privilege?

If we are serious about our commitment to securing a sustainable world, we must implement measures that are capable of taking a critical, reflective look at the systems that underpin and replicate inequalities on a global scale. As leaders, we cannot look away. As leaders, we must remain steadfast champions of social, economic and political inclusion. As leaders, we must always give voice to the shared truths of our global community. As leaders, we must become advocates for the peace and well-being of all. Sometimes that might not be the most popular position to take. We must be bold and defend the rights of vulnerable people wherever they are found. Human dignity, stability and freedom should be at the heart of our concerns. On the other hand, it is inspiring to see so many of us united in this global commitment to improve our world.

Our endorsement of the 2030 Agenda will better the lives of many and set in motion the processes of change that will encourage deep levels of cultural and structural transformation. Our commitment should instil more respect for fundamental human and other rights. We must take a stand where and when those rights are violated. The international community must stand firm in its rights-based approach to effectively address these realities. We must collaborate with each other and with other stakeholders, walking along a shared path to achieve common objectives.

Governments are not alone in pursuing their goals. The role of civil society is key, and I encourage non-governmental and other organizations to actively participate in the global transformation we envision today.

Future generations will judge us by the efforts we make, but efforts alone are not enough. We must come together as peers to deliver results and real change to benefit all humankind. The poor have waited long enough. It is time to act.

The Acting President: I thank the President of the Republic of Malta for her statement.

Ms. Marie Louise Coleiro Preca, President of the Republic of Malta, was escorted from the rostrum.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President and Head of Government of the Republic of Djibouti.

Mr. Ismaël Omar Guelleh, President and Head of Government of the Republic of Djibouti, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Guelleh (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session for his leadership and excellent work that enabled us to successfully conclude two important negotiations processes, namely, the third International Conference on Financing for Development and, yesterday morning, the post-2015 development agenda that we have just adopted (resolution 70/1).

I would also like to welcome and encourage the President of the General Assembly at its seventieth session, which marks the seventieth anniversary of our Organization and is historic on several counts. The current session will be an opportunity to review the achievements and untiring efforts of the United Nations in the areas of peace and security, development and the promotion of human rights, and it will also see the renewed commitment of Member States to a more secure and just world that is better preserved for future generations.

The Development Agenda that we have just adopted, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with 169 ambitious, universal targets aimed at transforming all societies by focusing on sustainable development, to be achieved through eradicating poverty and hunger, fighting inequality, ensuring the empowerment of women and girls and leaving no one behind; through strengthening sustainable economic development with the transformation and promotion of sustainable patterns of consumption and production; through the protection of our planet by combating climate change; and, finally, through the establishment of effective, inclusive and accountable institutions with a view to realizing sustainable development and thereby achieving a revitalized global partnership.

Mr. Rasmussen (Denmark), Co-Chair, took the Chair.

The new Development Agenda also takes into account the gaps and challenges observed during the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in a number of countries. It is important to recognize the tangible progress achieved by the African countries, including mine, in the achievement of the MDGs. Although challenges remain, genuine results were achieved in education, maternal and child health and in the fight against HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases.

The example of which I am most proud, which I wish to share with the Assembly, is progress in food security, thanks to national social development policies paired with regional cooperation strategies, which have helped boost agricultural production in our country. This has made it possible to reduce by half extreme poverty and hunger, as well as infant mortality. The Republic of Djibouti had the great honour to be among the countries rewarded by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in June 2015 for achieving those two MDGs despite drastic climatic conditions.

It is important in this pivotal year for sustainable development that the challenges and deficits that slowed the implementation of the MDGs be duly avoided and corrected. The financial resources mobilized both nationally and through international cooperation will be critical to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals. Official development assistance is crucial for the least developed countries, and it is imperative that the commitments made to them by development partners be finally honoured.

The conference to adopt the Addis Ababa Action Agenda was an important occasion during which there were international commitments for increased development financing, including through official development assistance, the promotion of foreign direct investment, and technology transfer, as well as commerce. It was also clearly agreed that because of the higher estimates of financial requirements necessary to achieve the SDGs, the financing sources are multiform and will come from public and private sources, both national and international. To me it seems clear that the SDGs will not be realized by 2030 unless each Goal is accompanied by adequate funding and by relevant indicators for each socioeconomic reality that will enable us to assess the results.

Clearly, for successfully achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and financing for development, all countries must increase their resilience by adopting a sustainable development model firmly directed towards a low-carbon future. Although countries like mine contribute little to the deterioration of the environment and climate change, they nevertheless suffer the consequences, which include droughts and recurrent floods. The effects of climate change primarily affect women, young people, the elderly and particularly those living in rural areas.

It is essential that the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in Paris, succeed and that all States seize that opportunity to make a serious, or even legally binding, commitment to curb the effects of climate change in the short term by slowing down greenhouse gas emissions, on the one hand, and, on the other, by adopting medium- and long-term policies and programmes for the reconstruction of ecosystems and by favouring solutions based on responsible environmental behaviour. That will help us individually and collectively to remedy the growing inequalities among and within States and will allow for autonomy for all and better social protection.

There is no doubt that achieving the Sustainable Development Goals is intrinsically linked to national ownership of this Agenda by our respective countries. As African countries, we welcome the Common African Position and its six pillars, as well as the priorities of our continental agenda, Agenda 2063, which have been integrated into the SDGs, as reflected in the 2030 Agenda.

I want to stress that in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda — whose motto is "Leave no one behind" — it is important that the national priorities for sustainable development, the laws and the specific social, cultural, moral and religious characteristics of each State and each society lie at the heart of this universal and inclusive Agenda, which is based on universally recognized human rights.

I would like to conclude by reaffirming the strong political will of the Republic of Djibouti to continue to work so that the socioeconomic development respectful of the environment as set out in the 2030 Agenda becomes the path we follow determinedly in the coming years and future generations.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: I thank the President and Head of Government of the Republic of Djibouti for his statement.

Mr. Ismaël Omar Guelleh, President and Head of Government of the Republic of Djibouti, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: I now call on the Vice-President of the Republic of South Sudan.

Mr. James Wani Igga, Vice-President of the Republic of South Sudan, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Igga (South Sudan): Despite the fact that South Sudan was born 11 years after the Millennium Summit in New York in September 2000, which set the Goals that aimed at improving the environment for humankind, the Millennium Development Goals have become benchmarks that will guide our planning for decades to come. While we might realistically have been included in the time frame as a country — side-by-side with such noble undertakings — but were not simply because we had not yet been born, we have nevertheless achieved something in that direction, setting our own time frames and parameters.

As for the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and their 169 targets, apparently they are going to cost the world nearly $45 trillion in just one year, and they clearly overlap. As uphill as the task may seem, South Sudan has selected and focused on just six of the Goals, in line with our priorities. Our number one Goal is food security and agriculture; second is infrastructure, including roads; third are energy and hydropower; fourth is health; fifth is education; and sixth is economic growth, alongside full, productive employment. Although the Government has the will to achieve those Goals, our chief impediment will certainly be financial.

The gap between the industrialized and the developing worlds could be closed through the simple instrument of economic growth, which has damaged the environment. While the developed world remains the exclusive emitter of greenhouse gases and responsible for climate change, we in the Third World must be helped in promoting the production of green energy for powering our imminent industrial growth, thereby preventing the negative socioeconomic implications of ecological damage.

The need for energy and the parallel need for financial resources are competing priorities for countries emerging from protracted civil wars. One of the main triggers of the 21-year war for independence in South Sudan was related, inter alia, to preventing the ecological damage that would have been created by draining one of the five largest wetlands in the world, measuring almost 57,000 square kilometres. As large oil deposits have been discovered in the Sudd region, we call on the world to help us make the necessary trade-off in order to protect the ecology of the vital global resource in the southern part of my country.

Indeed, the conflict between the ecology and the economy — the main preoccupation of the agenda of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm in 1972 — remains today the key challenge to sustainable development in South Sudan. We are more than committed to achieving that balance. It is required of us, as members of the global community. As we do so, we strongly believe in the positive spirit of the United Nations Conference on the Financing for Development, in its call for strong support for developing countries in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

To that end, there are important prerequisites for our journey together in achieving those noble Goals. One of them is that the region-based intergovernmental committees, which are going to work closely with the General Assembly in deploying international financial resources and technical know-how, should be given due weight. That will generate a cooperative environment in which the obstacles specific to sustainable development in Africa will be effectively addressed.

In conclusion, I must underscore that South Sudan is extremely rich in mineral and other natural resources, but they remain untapped. While we remain among the least developed countries in the world, services have improved in numerous mushrooming urban centres of the country. We call upon our partners to visit and hold one of the expected numerous conferences on sustainable development in South Sudan. Considering the fact that my country has zero greenhouse gas emissions, South Sudan's rich and untapped natural resources make it a suitable test case for implementing the post-2015 sustainable development agenda. Our nation, located exactly in the middle of the continent, stands to be a positive, regular contributor to the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda (resolution 70/1). We are firm in our resolve to continue in that direction, especially given the favourable climate of peace and stability that is now being established in my country.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: I thank the Vice-President of the Republic of South Sudan for his statement.

Mr. James Wani Igga, Vice-President of the Republic of South Sudan, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Mr. Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Sharif (Pakistan): I am delighted to be part of a defining moment in history — the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda in the form of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). We, as a global community, are committing ourselves to a shared vision of inclusive growth and development, while ensuring that no one is left behind. Our new Agenda reflects both ambition and action in our joint effort to combat poverty, hunger and human deprivation.

At the beginning of the century, we committed to a development agenda that brought an international focus on poverty, poverty eradication and human development. By putting people and their needs first, the Millennium Development Goals reshaped decision-making processes and redefined national priorities. As a result, over a billion people were rescued from extreme poverty. Substantial gains were also made in defeating hunger, illiteracy and disease. Our accomplishments, though many, were varied and unevenly distributed. Poverty, inequality and lack of opportunity remain stark realities in our time.

The post-2015 development agenda is a collective response to those challenges. It represents a giant leap forward. The 17 broad and cross-cutting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 169 associated targets chart a development-centric and growth-oriented pathway. The new Agenda posits itself on the three dimensions of sustainable development, namely, social justice, environmental stewardship and economic well-being. It is, therefore, an agenda of change that enjoys inherent vitality, as well as wide social acceptability. The focus is on transforming our economies and livelihoods, building cohesive, just and peaceful societies and protecting our planet. Poverty eradication remains at its core.

Our journey does not end with the adoption of the new Agenda. It has only just begun. The scope and magnitude of our new development framework is enormous. Delivering on it will require unwavering political will at both the national and the international levels. Its implementation requires a paradigm shift in our political, social, economic and development outlook.

We know from experiences in our own country that strong and sustained economic growth has to be at the heart of any effort to achieve those goals. Social development requires synergies among key development priorities, including employment generation, energy security, demographic challenges, disaster-risk reduction and governance. It entails expanding access to energy and infrastructure and making them available to a larger proportion of the population.

It will be equally important to address both systemic issues and structural constraints. Credible and timely data are needed to underpin our success. They are critical enablers for success. Most importantly, the meaningful implementation of the new Agenda demands matching resources. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development provides a promising start. It complements the means of implementation outlined in the new development framework. We must deliver on those commitments.

Development strategies remain, first and foremost, national undertakings. The eradication of poverty and disease and the provision of a better standard of living are among our abiding commitments to our people.

For Pakistan, the Sustainable Development Goals complement our own development needs and priorities, which are outlined in our Vision 2025. That document provides a policy framework for integrating the new Goals into our national economic and development planning. It is also a blueprint of our political commitment to the process. The Government has initiated a series of wide-ranging reforms aimed, inter alia, at expanding our resource base, stemming illicit capital outflows and ensuring optimum use of existing resources. We are equally aware of the importance of a robust monitoring and follow-up mechanism for effective and full implementation of the SDGs in Pakistan. Elaborate coordination and oversight procedures have, accordingly, been put in place at both the national and the provincial levels.

We also have a historic opportunity to reverse the threatening tide of climate change. We must therefore negotiate an outcome in Paris that is fair, equitable and guided by the principles of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. As we do our part, we look forward to a revitalized global partnership that promotes and complements domestic policies and priorities, in line with our development needs.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: I thank the Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for his statement.

Mr. Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Belgium.

Mr. Charles Michel, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bel gium, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Michel (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) should provide new impetus for our global commitment. We face several challenges, which are largely interdependent, including climate and migration, poverty and hunger, peace and security, and even extremism. Some of them are the causes or repercussions of other challenges. Some of them exacerbate others. In order to overcome those obstacles, we need to share a universal and ambitious vision, but above all, we need to share a vision to bring about genuine transformation for our fellow citizens.

The time for assessments, reports and studies has passed. Now, we must act and act in an organized and consistent manner. The guiding concept for our action should be to successfully meet the needs of current generations without jeopardizing the needs of future generations. The 2030 Agenda can be our compass for the next 15 years. It is a universal, integrated and interdependent Agenda. Seventy years after the United Nations was established, multilateralism is needed, now more than ever, to meet the challenges of this century.

Our action has a solid foundation, namely, human rights. Belgium advocates for an approach founded on fundamental freedoms. Gender equality, the freedom of expression, the freedom of opinion, the freedom of the press and the rule of law — they form at every turn the path to development. Amartya Sen has stated that no substantial famine has ever taken place in a functioning democracy. And I believe deeply in the correctness of that assertion. I would ask everybody to think about it.

I want to outline a couple of points that are important to my country.

First, as regards peace and security, conflict destroys the hopes of women and men for a dignified life. Our development efforts will come to nothing without peace and without security. We must mobilize to push back wars and conflicts. Social inclusion, decent work and social protection are essential in guaranteeing sustainable growth. The fight against inequality is an integral part of our aspiration to achieve dignity for all.

That struggle also applies to non-discrimination, to which there should be no exception. I condemn all forms of racism, but I would also like to touch on other forms of discrimination that we see every day, based, for example, on gender or sexual orientation. And from this high rostrum, I would like to launch an appeal for respect of the rights of homosexuals. Under no circumstances anywhere in the world should homosexuality be considered a crime. And we will be the tireless advocates for the cause of the elimination of discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Women's rights and their equality with men should not just be guaranteed, they should also be a reality. Full access to education for girls is needed to put an end to the incredible waste of human resources represented by women and girls kept in ignorance. Access to reproductive health, guarantees for sexual rights, access to family planning and contraception — those are issues that I refuse to shy away from simply because they make some people uncomfortable. From this rostrum, I would like to state our wish that all of those barriers and taboos should fall.

I would also like to talk about digitalization and access to the Internet. That is also an area with potential for development. We must, of course, avoid two main pitfalls. Internet access must not be used as a means for violating or controlling the private lives of people, and, on the other, it must not be used as a vehicle for broadcasting hatred, extremism and radicalism.

Belgium has also shown its commitment through its development aid. We have decided to devote half of our development aid to the least developed countries, and we made a pledge to that effect at the third International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa. Besides public development aid, we also need to mobilize all of the other sources of aid. I am thinking of the mobilization and effective use of domestic resources.

Of course, the private sector is a decisive partner in devising strategies for facing development challenges. Transparency, the fight against corruption and the rule of law are key areas here. The private sector is a driver of economic growth, and public and private initiatives should be mutually reinforcing. In that framework, the modification of non-sustainable modes of production and consumption is also a main objective. Economic growth must go hand in hand with sustainable production and consumption. Today, innovations need to balance between reducing negative impacts on the environment and improving the quality of life. We advocate large-scale investment in such initiatives.

The real work should start now. The size of the task requires commitment on the part of all countries. Belgium and all of its institutions are committed. And each needs to take part in that universal vision.

In that same line of thought, each citizen can carry out daily acts that would facilitate human rights and respect for our planet. Access to information and education for sustainable development should also be encouraged. We should also work to evaluate the progress that has been accomplished and compare what has been done with the fundamental indicators.

In conclusion, I stress the importance of the work that has been done within the United Nations framework We worked together for several months to draw up the 2030 Agenda. Each party demonstrated its responsibility and solidarity. We are meeting here today at the highest level to commit together.

Belgium has always advocated proactive and effective multilateralism. I hope that the 2030 Agenda will be a major success in this century. But that success will depend on us and our tenacity. We must ensure that those who succeed us in 15 years will be able to state with pride that there was a positive outcome from the process that begins today, and that they can say "We have succeeded"!

Co-Chair Rasmussen: I thank the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Belgium for his statement.

Mr. Charles Michel, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Belgium, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, was escorted to the rostrum.

Sheikh Hasina (Bangladesh): We have joined the people of the world in adopting a new universal agenda for sustainable development. I commend all those who contributed to developing the people-centred 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1).

In 2000, I joined world leaders in adopting the Millennium Declaration (resolution 55/2). Over the past 15 years, we mobilized our people and resources to realize the commitments that we made then. We are happy that we have attained almost all the targets of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), including those related to poverty eradication, the reduction of maternal and child mortality and communicable diseases. The realization of the MDGs has helped Bangladesh to graduate to be a middle-income country.

A key to our success has been our political commitment and the conducive policy environment that we created in Bangladesh. We have mobilized our national resources, enhanced capabilities and empowered people. We aligned our development policies and strategies early. We have engaged in partnerships with a wide range of local and international actors. We also developed numerous innovations and development solutions across sectors. We ensured that inequality did not increase and that our actions directly benefited people. We are pleased that some of our solutions and experiences are now part of the global solutions.

Building on our experience, Bangladesh joined the long process to craft a transformative agenda for the future. Now, we all must pledge to fully and effectively realize the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. To deliver on the SDGs, robust global cooperation is critical. In realizing the Agenda, we have to recognize the diverse national realities, capacities and levels of development, and respecting national policies and priorities will be equally important in that connection. We will have to address all forms of inequality across the Agenda.

In this collective journey, the international community must deliver on its pledges to provide the means for implementing each Goal across the Agenda. We need support in the areas of finance, technology, capacity-building and debt. We must also ensure that global trading and the financial regime and institutions are fair and just.

The day before yesterday, the General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda with great joy. As part of its national preparation, Bangladesh is aligning its seventh five-year development plan with that new global Agenda. We have decided to set up a new national mechanism for coordinating the Agenda's implementation within the Government under the overall supervision of my Office.

We are all looking forward to delivering with similar ambition, focus and commitment on a global deal on climate change in Paris in December. Climate change is putting Bangladesh's precious development gains at risk, and we must therefore ensure that our new development agenda and the new climate deal will deliver when it comes to protecting and harnessing the present and future of humankind. Let us all work together to deliver on our 2030 Agenda.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: I thank the Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh for her statement.

Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Energy, Minister for National Security, Public Administration, Disaster Management, Home Affairs, Information and Implementation of Grenada.

Mr. Keith Mitchell, Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Energy, Minister for National Security, *Public Administration, Disaster Management, Home Affairs, Information and Implementation of Grenada, was escorted to the rostrum.*

Mr. Mitchell (Grenada): There is an old African proverb that says: if you want to travel fast, you go alone, but if you want to travel far, you go together. In many ways, our path as a global civilization since the Industrial Revolution has been one focused on speed and individualism, as has been well documented in Thomas Piketty's award-winning treatise on economics, *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*.

The road straight ahead of us does not go very far. It commits all of humankind and its unborn generations to an inhospitable world where, according to a World Bank report, the temperature will be 4° Celsius above pre-industrial levels. It is a world of floods, droughts and famines, a world of mass migrations, in which communities will surely rise up against communities and nations against nations. In the words of His Holiness Pope Francis, speaking in this very Hall, "Any harm done to the environment, therefore, is harm done to humankind" (*A/70/PV.3, p. 3*). That world of floods, drought, famine and mass migration is not down the road. It is happening right now. This year of 2015 is set to be the warmest since record-keeping began in 1880.

We built the United Nations for the express purpose of avoiding such great calamities. We built it so that we can go together and go very far. At this very moment in history, the entire future of our planet and human civilization has come to a fork in the road. It offers a new and broader pathway for many, not just for the few. It is a pathway to a greener and cleaner world, and a more just world, a world where we can travel together and go very far together. As the late Yogi Berra once said, "When you come to a fork in the road, take it."

In my tri-island State of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique, ordinary Grenadians are increasingly seeing themselves as shepherds of the environment. In recent history, Grenada, once considered to be below the hurricane belt, has seen two successive hurricanes devastate our people and cause damage amounting to 200 per cent of our annual gross domestic product.

When it comes to greening our economy, we have worked to pass a new electricity act with a view to moving to 100 per cent renewables. That is in line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 7, on energy, and SDG 13, on climate. The United States has selected Grenada as a pilot country for the transformation of the power sector in the Caribbean, and we are grateful for that help. We are also appreciative of the support of China, Venezuela, Germany, New Zealand and others, as we seek to manage our energy challenges and transform that important sector. SDG 17, on partnerships, is therefore deeply ingrained in our approach, and as a small island developing State (SIDS), we also wish to commend SIDS DOCK, an international partnership for renewable energy in small island developing States. As part of our green economy, we have also introduced a price on carbon through a fuel levy, which is helping to improve our fiscal space. We are also introducing climate-smart agriculture, in line with SDGs 13 and 15.

Collectively, Grenada and its islands have 348 square kilometres of territory. But beyond that we have 26,000 square kilometres of blue ocean space. Grenada's blue economy is therefore vital and exemplified by our coastal tourism, the main driver of our economy. That is why we have committed to conserving 20 per cent or more of our near-shore marine resources. And in line with SDG 14, on oceans, we are pleased to be working with the Government of the Netherlands, the World Bank and others on the Global Network for Blue Growth and Food Security, along with a Blue Grenada investment strategy. Moreover, in April 2016, in concert with its partners, Grenada will host a global blue-growth investment conference designed to move the needle on ocean health and wealth. The conference should put ocean States in a better position to report positive results when they meet in Fiji in 2017 to review progress on SDG 14. Grenada is also joining with Dominica and the Marshall Islands to promote a new initiative, entitled "We Are the Oceans", which will begin by educating our young people.

That brings me to my final point, concerning SDG 4, on education. Education is critical to the future of our children and the entire planet. I am standing in this Hall today because I was among the fortunate who were granted an education. But not enough of our young people, at home or abroad, are getting access to a quality education. That is why my Government has set aside the largest portion of its operating fiscal budget for education. Already, education represents 20 per cent of Grenada's gross domestic product. St. George's University in Grenada, which is training more and more Grenadians, also produces one of every hundred doctors practising in the United States.

Finally, as part of my duty as the head of science and technology for the Caribbean Community, I wish to welcome President Obama's invitation to the Caribbean States to send representatives to meet with the Government of the United States and the United States information and communications technology industry in Silicon Valley. Such efforts not only underscore the spirit of partnership but also point the way forward towards better education, more innovation and more jobs, as we seek to reduce global poverty and inequality in line with the Sustainable Development Goals on poverty, gender equality, employment, and industry and innovation.

In closing, I wish to applaud the Secretary-General's efforts in presiding over the United Nations at a time when we have chosen a new path for a more sustainable world. With his continued leadership as we head towards the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris, and beyond, we feel confident that, as a global community, we are making the right move. He can be assured of Grenada's full support as we take this new pathway for our people, for our planet, for peace and for prosperity — a path on which we will embark together and on which we will go far.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: I thank the Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Energy, Minister for National Security, Public Administration, Disaster Management, Home Affairs, Information and Implementation of Grenada for his statement.

Mr. Keith Mitchell, Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Energy, Minister for National Security, Public Administration, Disaster Management, Home Affairs, Information and Implementation of Grenada, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of Malaysia.

Dato' Sri Mohd Najib bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, Prime Minister of Malaysia, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Razak (Malaysia): The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) adopted in 2000 set targets to be delivered by 2015, and in the past 15 years there have been many significant achievements. The world has also become far more inclusive. Access to education, health information, communications technology and job opportunities has broadened significantly. The MDGs also brought national Governments, the international community, civil society and the private sector together, all aiming at a common set of goals. It galvanized the necessary political commitment, leveraged resources and spurred actions, and the results show what can be achieved when we recognize our common humanity and put our fellow man first.

At the same time, progress has been uneven. Millions are still suffering, especially the poorest and the disadvantaged, because of their gender, age, disability, ethnicity or even geographic locations. Targeted efforts will be needed to reach the most vulnerable. Even today, around 800 million people still live in poverty and suffer from hunger. We may have met the target of halving extreme poverty rates, but the world is still far from reaching the overall goal of eradicating poverty and hunger. That, then, must remain at the core of the post-2015 development agenda, and it is imperative that no one be left behind.

Malaysia is absolutely committed to the post-2015 agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and our aspirations to transform the world by 2030. Inclusivity and sustainable development have long been at the heart of our own transformation from a developing country to one that is on course to achieving high-income status by 2020.

Between 1970 and 2014, the incidence of poverty in Malaysia was reduced from 49.3 per cent to 0.6 per cent, while hard-core poverty was eradicated. Mean monthly household income has increased more than twenty-fold, from $277 in 1970 to $1,781 in 2014. Malaysia is now about to embark on its next five-year development plan, the Eleventh Malaysia Plan: 2016-2020. In many aspects the Plan mirrors the multidimensional nature of the SDGs and has been formulated with the people at the centre of all development efforts.

Mr. González Franco (Paraguay), Vice-President, took the Chair.

What we refer to as the "people economy" will be given priority, reinforcing my Government's commitment to bringing further development to our citizens by enriching their lives, providing them with dignity and enhancing their potential to share in growth and the fruits of prosperity. For the first time in the history of Malaysia, national growth targets will include not only gross domestic production growth and per capita income but also household income and the Malaysian well-being index. We are committed to ensuring equitable opportunities for all, and the bottom 40 per cent of households in particular. That will be done through initiatives that are focused on outcome-based support and productivity-linked systems and will include training in entrepreneurship skills, the adoption of technology, asset ownership and investment in improving connectivity and basic amenities. We aim to double average income for the bottom 40 per cent of households, from $700 in 2014 to $1500 by 2020, elevating them to the middle class.

We will also raise the participation rate of women in the work force from 53 per cent to 59 per cent by 2020, and we will transform rural areas by improving connectivity and mobility and help them to become ever more business-friendly environments. We are working towards providing equal access to quality health care and affordable housing and will build more clinics and hospitals and affordable homes over the next few years.

We are determined to be good custodians of our environment, so that we preserve our natural resources and beautiful landscape for future generations. Green growth is no longer an option reserved for idealists, but a practical necessity for us and for other Governments around the world. All this because we recognize that human capital is the most important resource for development, not just in Malaysia but in all our united nations.

On that note, allow me to reaffirm Malaysia's commitment to supporting and implementing the 2030 Development Agenda for Sustainable Development. Not only is a better future within our grasp, but it is also our duty to fight for it. I urge all those present to join us in that noble and necessary endeavour.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Prime Minister of Malaysia for the statement he has just made.

Dato' Sri Mohd Najib bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, Prime Minister of Malaysia, was escorted from the rostrum.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear a statement by the President of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Italy.

Mr. Matteo Renzi, President of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Italy, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Renzi (*Italy*): This is the time to erase poverty and hunger and to guarantee a safe ecosystem for future generations. I would like first of all to commend the action of the Secretary-General and the Organization's elites for moving forward on the new Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is an achievement in and of itself. We have come up with a common Agenda with universal goals to be applied everywhere, without regard for the different levels of development — an agenda that will promote effective development sustainability and break new ground for the way we will act in the years to come. It is both an opportunity and a responsibility.

What we need now is global action. Every nation is capable of addressing and meeting that very important challenge. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) envisages a new, truly global partnership, not only among Governments, but among parliaments, non-governmental organizations, businesses, citizens — every one has a role to play. This unequivocally new global deal, based on five P's — people, prosperity, partnership, planet and peace — will be a legacy for the next generation. Italy is ready to make important strides in this direction.

Although Italy is the leading contributor of troops to United Nations peacekeeping operations, we know that we need something more than just peacekeeping. Beyond peacekeeping, we need greater investment in, for example, education initiatives. And the new framework for sustainable development encompasses peace and security, the rule of law, the promotion of human rights, and effective and democratic governance and institutions.

I feel compelled to take the opportunity afforded by this special Summit to speak about the tragedy that has been unfolding for too long now in the Mediterranean Sea. Shores that were once the cradle of civilization have become the stage on which an undeserved struggle, unbelievable suffering and an unacceptable loss of life are being played out daily. The flow of countless desperate people trying to reach Europe to fulfil their simple aspiration of having a decent life is without precedent. It is the result of poverty and, worse, lack of development, and extremism.

Too many have died. Many more have been rescued on the open sea, and I am proud of my people for their efforts in saving so many. But these people without a country — who, as Pope Francis said, have escaped from countries of Africa and elsewhere — need a very clear answer today. Italy is aware of its own moral responsibility and that of all the countries in the European Union. We hope that we will succeed in reaching the very important result of a common European asylum system. That is the only solution — not the building of walls, but a common European asylum system.

However, there is a new strategy before us. Our new Agenda is a very good start. We endorse the 2030 Agenda across every sector, through our national Green Act and in initiatives in the food and nutritional security area, particularly with regard to exports. The international food exhibition in Milan is a platform that Italy offers to the world for a global discussion on nutrition. The vast majority of countries represented in this Hall participate in it, and we take pride in that. I would recall the message that comes from Milan — "Feeding the planet, energy for life" — which is a visionary motto, chosen more than eight years ago, that touches directly upon our discussion today.

At the same time, we are ready to work in the right direction in every field. I personally participated in the third International Conference on Financing for Development, in Addis Ababa. I think it is crucial that when Italy heads the Group of Seven in 2017, it should lead the way by being one of the major international donors. Italy is perfectly positioned to foster dialogue between Europe and Africa. Geographically speaking, Italy is a bridge. We must become a cultural bridge as well. And we must make significant investments in energy security, in small and medium-sized enterprises, in microcredit, and in public programmes for development.

Before concluding, I wish to acknowledge the people who are suffering today, the countries paying the highest price, particularly the small island developing States and the countries of Africa. That said, I believe that the 2030 Agenda is sending a message of hope. This new Agenda, which calls for a new collective effort, does offer new hope for future generations.

I would like to conclude on a personal note. International assistance — cooperation — is the reason why I am a politician. As a young man entering politics as a volunteer 20 years ago, I was already passionate about the impact of development assistance on ordinary people. I realized that I wanted to run for office and make a difference. Politics is that — the possibility to make a difference, not only at the level of Government, but also for the people outside the Government. Twenty years later, as the Prime Minister of my country, I am particularly honoured to be able to say to the General Assembly that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is not just an opportunity for the official international community to orient itself; it is also the best opportunity ever to bring a fairer future and hope to ordinary people.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the President of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Italy for his statement.

Mr. Matteo Renzi, President of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Italy, was escorted from the rostrum.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Head of Government of the Republic of Tunisia.

Mr. Habib Essid, Head of Government of the Republic of Tunisia, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Essid (Tunisia) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to thank and congratulate Mr. Ban Ki-moon and all those who participated in bringing about the success of the negotiations on the post-2015 sustainable development agenda. I wish to express my esteem for their efforts in this area.

I am more than a little proud to be taking part in this special Summit today, which has been convened by the United Nations to reflect the international community's recognition of how important development is and how the issue is linked to the aspirations of all human beings to happiness, a dignified life, well-being, security and balanced development, without discrimination. These rights apply in all countries.

Working with civil society, Tunisia adopted an integrated development policy — overall and by sector — based on the complementarity between demographic and environmental factors, on the one hand, and development factors, on the other hand. Tunisia's success in meeting most of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) reflects the seriousness with which our country is striving, together with other countries worldwide, to meet the challenges of development around the world. However, ours is only a relative success, since we have recorded failures in the form of gaps in development among regions and a persistently high level of unemployment, which has had a negative impact on economic development.

Notwithstanding the scale of these challenges, post-revolution Tunisia has adopted some radical policy reforms. It has thus managed to consolidate the principles of the Republic, in particular the fundamental values of democracy and human rights, which are now enshrined in the Constitution of our Second Republic. We also are working on a collective approach to reform based on a national vision that was developed in a five-year development plan with a focus on achieving maximum social justice and carrying out affirmative action policies designed to help those who experienced discrimination and marginalization in the past.

Tunisia played an active role in the preliminary negotiations and efforts to create the post-2015 development agenda as a member of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals. As such, we were involved in various meetings and actively participated in negotiations among Governments with a view to their definition. We took a number of initiatives in Tunisia, such as consultative meetings in Tunis and in the various regions. We also, in cooperation with specialized United Nations agencies, conducted various surveys to find out the kind of Tunisia Tunisians wanted to have. Some of the survey results, drawn from a sample of 10,000 participating citizens, who shared their aspirations and concerns with respect to our national development programme, provided the basis for our national plan.

When preparating to participate in this Summit, we decided that we would be forthright in expressing our views on current concerns. We would like to reiterate that the ongoing plagues affecting societies, such as terrorism, lack of security, and sectarian and ethnic conflicts, all require serious efforts on our part to take into account the diverse development situations, especially those in the most disadvantaged regions of the world. The achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals of the post-2015 development agenda will depend on how serious the international community is in translating those Goals into concrete reality on the ground so that no one is left behind or excluded.

Tunisia is concerned about the need to establish a framework for follow-up mechanisms to ensure that the Goals are effectively implemented. To that end, we are establishing partnerships with all stakeholders in civil society, Government and international organizations in full transparency and with credibility and seriousness.

Finally, I cannot conclude without reiterating my gratitude to all members of the international community for working towards the aspiration for well-being of all humankind. All such aspirations and principles serve as the foundation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Head of Government of the Republic of Tunisia for his statement.

Mr. Habib Essid, Head of Government of the Republic of Tunisia, was escorted from the rostrum.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic.

Mr. Alexis Tsipras, Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Tsipras (Greece): It is very important that our post-2015 development agenda address the interrelated challenges of eradicating poverty and achieving sustainable development by introducing a signal set of new Sustainable Development Goals that call for a balance among the economic, social and environmental dimensions of development. But the questions remain. How can we ensure that in the next 15 years we do not repeat the same mistakes as in the past 15 years or the 15 before that? Why is it that in the past 30 plus years the security, economic, social and environmental challenges we face on a global and regional level stay the same or get even worse?

Our experience in Greece could be instructive. Greece is at the centre of three overlapping crises — a eurozone economic crisis, as a result of neoliberal policy choices that led to a 25 per cent decrease in our gross domestic product in the past five years; a security crisis, because of the increasing instability surrounding Greece in North Africa, the Middle East and the Black Sea; and a refugee crisis, resulting in the mass migration of hundreds of thousands of people seeking a better life in Europe.

In order to face such challenges, we must set and strive for goals such as the ones we discuss today, but our experience in Greece shows that it will not be enough. None of the challenges we face in Greece, in our broader region, in Europe or even on a global level, can be dealt with solely by setting goals and leaving the framework in which we function untouched and beyond dispute. We cannot talk substantially about aid to developing countries or loans from developed ones unless we tackle the issue of debt as an international challenge at the centre of our global financial system. In all competent forums, including this one, we need to talk about how the restructuring or reprofiling of public debt can be linked with development.

Historical experience shows that debt restructuring is necessary for recovery, even for developed countries, as was the case for Germany in 1953. We cannot talk about the eradication of poverty or unemployment unless we can discuss how to build or improve welfare States instead of destroying them. We must distance ourselves from the neoliberal idea that markets are the sole resource allocator in the economy. We also cannot talk about a solid State tax base when the global financial system supports and encourages tax havens and the founding of off-shore companies. In just the same way, we cannot talk about a solid tax system unless democratically elected Governments retain the right to decide on whom they choose to lay the tax burden.

A substantial development agenda can take root only in an economic, financial and political environment that fosters development. Greece, as a pillar of stability in our region, will consistently promote and support all efforts for such a global and European economic and financial system — a system that will allow our 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to flourish in the next 15 years, rather than suffocating it as happened in the past 30 years. Of course, it will not be easy. As the great economist John Maynard Keynes said, "The difficulty lies not so much in developing new ideas as in escaping from old ones."

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic for his statement.

Mr. Alexis Tsipras, Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic, was escorted from the rostrum.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear a statement by the First Vice-President of the European Union.

Mr. Timmermans (European Union): It is astonishing just how much has happened since the Millennium Summit. We all know the figures, but if you actually picture the people behind them, they become more than just numbers. Just think about it: a quarter of the world's population was born after that Summit. Today, they are 15 years old or younger. Of all these kids, 9 out of 10 now get to go to school. Those who are babies or toddlers are half as likely to die as they would have been in 1990, and their mothers are half as likely to die in childbirth. For the girls among them, their chances of having real opportunities — even if by no means equal opportunities yet — have greatly improved at school, at work and in life. In short, many millions have come into a much better world than the generation before them.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have indeed made a difference and, as important, they helped us to unite against indifference. The European Union helped to drive this agenda because it believes this is in essence what the United Nations was set up to achieve: social progress and a fairer future.

We are now ready for the next chapter. The MDGs showed us that the lack of development of some countries is a threat to all of us, but so is unsustainable development on a global scale. This is the challenge that today we commit to overcoming together.

That makes the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) even more universal than the previous one. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are not just for some countries, but for all countries — rich and poor alike. Yes, the list is long, but these Goals are comprehensive because they reflect the reality of today's world and the way today's problems are daunting, complex and interlinked.

For the very first time in the history of humankind, the boundaries of the planet are actually within sight. Inequalities are increasing and social cohesion is eroding. Global competition for resources is at an all-time high. The models that worked for so many of us in the past are not ones that will work for all of us in the future. We have to redefine our societies and our relationship with nature. Of course, this feels threatening, but fear can be a powerful engine. We have to be creative because, fundamentally, this is about rethinking everything we do. This pertains to all of us — people, companies, Governments and international organizations.

In countries like ours, there is no excuse for not meeting our 0.7 per cent target for official development assistance. It is more urgent than ever. But this time under the SDGs it is not about just footing the bill. Those countries fortunate enough to have a developed or emerging economy are committed to playing a different role. This is not just about development aid. It is just as much about change at home.

My main message, Europe's message, to all these countries is: it is also our turn now to step out of our comfort zone. It is about very concrete questions: how we have to turn around our economies to make them circular, leaving behind our take-make-consume-anddispose growth pattern and how we must mend our societies' social fabric and how we integrate newcomers, which is all the more important when they come as refugees fleeing war and persecution. It is about clean air, water and oceans. It is about more resilient cities that are healthy, inclusive and safe. It is about tackling food waste. A third of the food worldwide is thrown away, which is frankly shocking beyond belief. It is about our collective action to keep the global temperature rise below 2° Celsius.

These are not impossible goals. We have innovation on our side to find solutions, if we have the will to act. In Europe, we are determined to do this jointly and we want to fully engage with the United Nations in experience-sharing, capacity-building and progress-monitoring. We want to do this together. The SDGs will shape our development policy and infuse our policies abroad and at home. Ultimately, this is all about governance and inclusiveness. Societies will accept transformation only if people feel their voices have been heard. It is also about breaking out of silos. Sustainable development is not just an economic or social challenge or an environmental problem; it is all three. Our efforts on each need to reinforce, rather than undermine, one another.

The Agenda is about eradicating poverty and putting sustainability at the heart of everything we do. This is not just the right thing to do, it is the smart thing to do: for our economy, for our environment, for our society and for our children and grandchildren. We have a world to transform. This common Agenda shows the way how.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of Ukraine.

Mr. Petro Poroshenko, President of Ukraine, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Poroshenko: On behalf of Ukraine, I express my full support for the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1).

I would like to recall that back in 1992, Ukraine took part in the historic United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, where it testified its will to shape the future on the basis of the principles of sustainable development. Over the 23 years that have passed since then, we have accumulated extensive positive experience and at the same time have tasted the bitterness of defeat as proponents of war and terrorism have been fiercely resisting progress in many parts of the world.

The far-reaching Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets, which we declared at this historic Summit, open up new horizons for humankind and lay the foundations for the sustainable development of our planet for the next 15 years. We commend the transparency and inclusiveness of the preparatory process, which culminated in the post-2015 development framework. More than 25,000 Ukrainians took part in the global consultations and expressed their own vision of the SDGs. Working hard to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which were set up 15 years ago, our countries have considerably changed the lives of millions of people worldwide.

As for Ukraine, I would like to emphasize that it has managed to reduce threefold our poverty rates — but, because of the Russian aggression, we expect this rate of reduction to drop; it has managed to improve the maternal health system; to almost halve child mortality; to reduce HIV/AIDS incidence rates; and to make progress in combating tuberculosis. We will keep on working to fulfil our commitments on the MDGs related to improving the quality of education, promoting gender equality and ensuring environmental sustainability. I am convinced that we have to build on the momentum generated by the MDGs to make further progress in the priority areas set out in the post-2015 development agenda.

There will be no sustainable development without peace and freedom. The bitter experience of Ukraine reveals that peace and freedom are principal preconditions for achieving the SDGs. Sustainable development is not achievable where explosions are heard and peaceful people are killed. It is not achievable where aggressive ideologies advocating the suppression of some nations by other nations reign and key human rights and freedoms are violated.

Strengthening universal peace and promoting larger freedom should become a driving and unifying force behind our collective efforts to achieve the SDGs. Today, Ukraine has to implement much needed systemic reform while opposing the Russian aggressor, which is attempting to undermine the democratic European development that the Ukrainian people have chosen.

As a result of Russia's treacherous annexation of the Ukrainian Crimea and its aggression in the Donbas region, thousands of people have been killed, critical infrastructure has been ruined and Ukraine has lost about one fifth of its economic potential. Russia's military actions against Ukraine have also increased environmental and epidemiological threats, along with the risk of social exclusion. Chemical sites in the conflict area in the eastern part of Ukraine and in the adjacent territories represent a particular danger. The threats of potential man-made technological catastrophes are severe. In that context, Ukraine believes that it is high time for the United Nations to address the issue of environmental protection in conflicts, and it will present a specific idea to that end.

The external aggression has led to the emergence of a new form of poverty — sudden and unexpected poverty — that affects the lives of some 1.5 million internally displaced persons. Each day of the war in Donbas costs us close to $5 million that we could have invested in sustainable development. The crisis of the approximately 1.5 million internally displaced people is the biggest problem, not only for Ukraine but for the whole region.

Ukraine aspires to peace and prosperity and, together with its partner States, is making maximum efforts to settle the conflict by peaceful diplomatic means. After putting an end to the military aggression, re-establishing peace and restoring Ukraine's full sovereignty over the Donbas region and Crimea, it will be essential to return millions of people to normal life and to restore economic and social infrastructure on a sustainable development basis. Ukraine stands ready to accomplish that difficult task and calls on all international partners to cooperate towards that end.

Ukraine is steadfastly following the path of reform set out in its Strategy 2020 for sustainable development Despite existing challenges, we have translated our. strategic tasks into tangible actions. Against the backdrop of implementing its Association Agreement with the European Union, as well as its resisting the ongoing Russian aggression, the focus of Ukrainian society today is first and foremost on fighting corruption; ensuring equal opportunities and social justice; maintaining an effective public health system; promoting decent work; ensuring affordable education for all; promoting innovation, development and the building of sustainable infrastructure; and ensuring a sustainable energy supply, food security and a healthy environment.

I would like to assure those present that, in order to achieve the SDGs at the national level, Ukraine will implement new programmes and projects aimed at ensuring macroeconomic stability, environmental balance and social cohesion. The SDGs will serve as an overarching framework for further transformation in Ukraine, including in the context of implementing our Strategy 2020.

As a responsible member of the international community, Ukraine seeks to take an active part in addressing current global challenges as a prerequisite for achieving the SDGs. With regard to the environmental dimension in particular, we need to act vigorously to prevent the threats posed by climate change and the degradation of the environment. Reaching a compromise on a balanced climate agreement would bode well for our collective efforts towards that aim. Implementing new, expanded models of scientific and technical cooperation among States Members of the United Nations, in particular through the establishment of a universal mechanism for technology transfer, is key to bridging many gaps in sustainable development.

I am convinced that by working hand in hand and implementing our post-2015 development Goals, as well as by jointly tackling existing challenges, we will ensure that humankind successfully negotiates the path to progress.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the President of Ukraine for his statement.

Mr. Petro Poroshenko, President of Ukraine, was escorted from the rostrum.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The promotion of socioeconomic progress and prosperity for all countries and peoples lies at the very core of our Organization's mission. Forging a global partnership for development has been one of the most significant achievements of the United Nations, and one of which we can all rightly be proud.

Fifteen years ago, it was the United Nations that made it possible for the international community to unite to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The joint efforts of Member States, international non-governmental organizations, business and academia all facilitated considerable progress in providing access to health care and education for millions of people around the world, fighting poverty and hunger and reducing maternal and child mortality.

That impressive success in attaining the Millenniium Development Goals is not, of course,a reason for complacency. Addressing global challenges such as eradicating extreme poverty, combating inequality, ensuring food security and healthy lifestyles, and shifting to more sustainable patterns of production and consumption will require additional financial, industrial and technological resources, backed by an environment of constructive cooperation and mutual assistance and understanding. Many States still cannot alone overcome development challenges, which are often accompanied by political instability, discrimination and other constraints, and they need large-scale international support. A good basis for forging such cooperation is provided by the outcome of the third International Conference on Financing for Development, held in July in Addis Ababa.

Russia welcomes the adoption of the new global agenda for the period up to 2030. We stand ready to actively support its successful implementation at all levels. Guided by the principles of solidarity, our country will continue to make a significant contribution to building and strengthening the economic, intellectual, information, scientific and technological capacities of partner countries. We will further facilitate the effective utilization of the opportunities provided by global markets for goods and services, diversification of economic ties, active participation in integration processes. We will utilize the potential of women and youth and promote a child-friendly environment. Russia intends to use the achievements in science and technology, especially in information and communication technologies, which are essential today for accelerating global development and for bridging the gap between developed and developing countries.

Russia's development assistance is consistently aimed at resolving the most pressing challenges facing countries in need. In our efforts, we neither lecture our partners on how they should build their lives nor try to impose political models or values. Our main purpose is to eliminate poverty. One of the effective levers here is, of course, lightening the debt burden. Within the framework of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative, our country has written off over $20 billion of principal debt of African countries alone. Russia also contributes to reducing the debt burden of the poorest countries, beyond the HIPC, by using debt-for-aid swaps.

Our country has been funding and implementing aid projects in the fields of health, energy, education, food security and infrastructure. We use the potential of the United Nations development system organizations and humanitarian agencies, whose programmes do not have conditions or political biases. Despite the current challenging economic environment, Russia remains a responsible and reliable partner of developing countries in addressing the most pressing challenges confronting their people, for example, combating the spread of HIV/AIDs, tuberculosis and malaria; maternal, infant and child mortality; and the Ebola outbreak.

Our international development assistance is increasing. Last year it grew by more than 20 per cent. We provided more than $127 million through the United Nations system alone, and our overall official development assistance, calculated according to the methodology of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, exceeded $875 million. We will continue to increase our participation in multilateral development assistance efforts. In doing so, we base our efforts on the belief that helping countries in need to establish viable social and economic systems is an investment in global stability, an essential precondition for building a more effective and resilient international system and a factor in the well-being and prosperity of humankind as a whole.

We often speak of the indivisibility of international peace and security. The new social and economic agenda should also ensure understanding of the indivisibility of sustainable development. The international community's task is to work together to create external conditions conducive to socioeconomic progress. It is especially important to ensure fair trade conditions and greater access to cutting-edge technologies.

Russia supports creating an equitable global economic order and improving the regulation of global development. We call for action based on the universally recognized standards of international law and in the spirit of collective decision-making. We will increase our cooperation with our partners in useful formats such as the Group of 20 and the BRICS group of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, and we are open to dialogue within the framework of other informal structures, while, of course, respecting the central coordinating role of the United Nations.

We urge that more consistent efforts be made to reform organizational governance structures, particularly of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, in order to strengthen developing countries' positions. We believe it essential that the interaction of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council with the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization be made more effective, in the interests of harmonizing the governance of our global monetary, financial and trade systems. We also see an important role for the specialized United Nations agencies in those processes.

Russia remains firmly committed to strengthening regional cooperation, including integration within Eurasia. The recently established Eurasian Economic Union is becoming a significant factor in the creation of conditions conducive to positive, sustained and long-term economic growth in participating countries. In developing it, we have always supported harmonizing it with various integration mechanisms in both East and West.

The practice of taking unilateral coercive measures that violate the Charter of the United Nations runs directly counter to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Such illegitimate and restrictive acts, which also undermine market principles in trade, finance, technology and investment, should cease. That also applies to lifting the embargo on Cuba and other sanctions imposed by bypassing the Security Council.

We consider finding a solution to the problem of climate change to be a key precondition for achieving sustainable development. Our country is a world leader in the cumulative reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and compensates for increases in emissions in other countries and regions around the world. We have exceeded our commitments under the Kyoto Protocol by reducing our emissions to 31 per cent below their 1990 levels. In the past 20 years, Russia's energy sector emissions have fallen by 37 per cent, comparable to the five-year emissions of all European Union countries and the three-year emissions of the United States.

In the context of the preparations for the Paris session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, we have already announced the parameters of our potential commitments. In that regard, we would like to highlight the role of Russia's northern forests, which absorb around 600 million tons of carbon dioxide a year. We will be adding that factor to those being taken into account within the new agreement.

We propose that consideration be given to strengthening our efforts in line with the operating practices of the United Nations Forum on Forests. Within the framework of the Forum, we could discuss how to create some kind of United Nations centre for planning, protecting and restoring forests with a view to contributing to sustainable development and controlling climate change. In general, we believe it is essential that the decisions at the forthcoming session be comprehensive, legally binding and universal. Climate change is one of the most serious issues of our times, and the quality and effectiveness of any agreement should have top priority.

In this, its seventieth year, the United Nations remains the main international forum for developing basic principles and standards for socioeconomic, humanitarian and environmental cooperation. Multilateral associations, including informal leadership alliances, should organize their efforts in line with the fundamental agreements achieved within this universal and indisputably legitimate Organization. We are ready to make a comprehensive contribution to increasing the effectiveness of the work of the United Nations. I believe that together we can achieve effective and timely implementation of our new agenda for global development.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*):The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar.

Mr. Al-Attiyah (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would first like to thank the Secretary-General for convening this Summit, giving impetus to the post-2015 development agenda.

The world has seen profound changes since the launch of the Millennium Development Goals in 2000. While many of those Goals have been met, many have not. Today, the international community is committing to a new post-2015 development agenda, with a view to realizing security, stability, prosperity and sustainable development for our countries and peoples, based on lessons learned and our willingness to address current and potential challenges and our shared and differentiated responsibilities.

Ensuring the successful achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals requires that the international community tackle and find solutions to the obstacles to sustainable development — whether political, structural or related to a lack of capacity — in a practical and realistic way that takes into account the basic needs of developing countries, particularly by assisting them in their efforts to deal with their increasing marginalization in the global economy and to benefit from the economic and scientific potential available today.

National policies should also reflect the humanitarian and social aspects of development, prioritizing the development of strategies that meet people's basic needs and promote democracy and human rights, together with establishing rules for transparency and fighting corruption on the road to good governance. A commitment to the principles of the rule of law and accountability is essential to any development strategy, as was reaffirmed at the thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, held in Doha in April.

Partnership and international cooperation are crucial to sustainable development. They should be conducted on a basis of effective collaboration among nations, engaging especially with all sectors, public and private, and ensuring effective participation on the part of civil society and all other groups in society.

Development assistance from developed countries to developing and least developed countries should also be provided without restrictions or politicization. Donor countries should do their utmost to enable countries receiving aid to achieve development and establish policies that will enable them to provide for their people's basic needs and break the cycles of poverty and dependence. They should also promote policies directed at partnerships, investment and a true spirit of cooperation.

I should note here that in recent years Qatar has provided development assistance to many countries around the world dealing with economic and humanitarian difficulties and natural disasters. In 2014, this assistance amounted to more than 5.9 billion Qatari riyals. That represents 0.76 per cent of our gross domestic product, and it complemented the technical assistance we offered in the fields of education, health and other areas in accordance with the Millennium Declaration (resolution 55/2).

In this context, and proceeding from our keen interest in raising the levels of education and providing equal educational opportunity to all, we have sought to duplicate our successful experiment in development assistance and international cooperation with a view to reducing the number of children deprived of basic education all over the world, particularly those living in conflict zones. Six million children, including 600,000 children from fraternal Syria, have benefitted from the Qatari initiative "Educate A Child", launched in 2012 in conjunction with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Realizing sustainable development at national, regional and international levels requires political will, good faith and a true spirit of cooperation among nations. In this context, Qatar has been keen to assume its regional and international responsibilities with regard to attaining development objectives. In 2012, we hosted the eighteenth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and we look forward to the Paris Conference. We hope that an agreement that embodies our responsibilities in a common and differentiated manner will be reached and that it will assist in building the capacity of developing countries to adapt to climate change.

Out of our conviction that sustainable development cannot be achieved without food security, His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar, launched a new initiative with regard to drylands, desertification and drought all over the world. We look forward to seeing the initiative's positive impact in 2015 and beyond.

The realization of all our objectives cannot be achieved in occupied territories. Therefore, redoubled efforts to assist the development process itself should be made at the international level for the cause of peace.

Proceeding from our firm conviction on this point, we have deployed great efforts in favour of young people. We have encouraged their role in society and provided an enabling environment that permits them to play that role fully. In April 2015, in Doha, we held a youth forum on crime prevention and criminal justice.

Qatar has made great strides in the sustainable development process. We are pleased that the post-2015 development agenda is in line with our objectives at the national level and serves the economic, social and environmental targets that we seek to reach, particularly in the fields of security, health, education, culture and sports.

Qatar has taken great initiative to invest in its citizens. We have laid out a comprehensive development plan aimed at transforming Qatar into a developed country capable of providing a high standard of living for current and future generations.

Qatar takes a keen interest in the role of sport in promoting social cohesion and solidarity. We believe that sport helps to teach the virtues of equality, tolerance and peace to the young generation and therefore has a positive impact.

Qatar also considers culture to be a key element for development and an important factor in social cohesion, economic growth, poverty eradication, peace and security and human rights. We have therefore deployed great efforts in the fields of cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and development programmes in the belief that culture is of great importance, be it for education or the environment.

In conclusion, we reiterate our commitment to doing our utmost to help the international community achieve sustainable development and express our willingness to provide whatever material or technical support we can.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Maldives.

Ms. Maumoon (Maldives): This is a watershed moment in human history. The hallowed halls of this building have been abuzz with hope. The air is filled with excitement. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) has captured the imagination of every child, every woman and every man, in every corner of the world. This Agenda has the potential to truly transform our world. There has never been a time more auspicious, a time when so many leaders gathered here. We must not squander it.

It was 15 years ago that we made the solemn pledge to free the world from poverty, disease, discrimination and environmental degradation (see resolution 55/2). Fifteen years later, while our successes are many, so are our challenges. We may have reduced maternal mortality, but women are still paid 24 per cent less than men. We may have reduced the rate of absolute poverty, yet people living in slum-like conditions are plentiful. We may have protected and safeguarded some of our natural environment, but carbon emissions keep on increasing. There may still be a long way to go, but we have the potential to achieve more.

The Maldives is fully committed to the achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals with their 169 targets. The Maldives is an Millennium Development Goal (MDGs) success story, and we are proud of it. We are fortunate that the MDGs were formulated at a time when the Maldives was experiencing phenomenal growth in the economic and social sectors. We incorporated the Goals into our development planning and aimed at achieving unprecedented development gains.

To sustain that trajectory of growth, the Maldives has to overcome several challenges, which is a task that will test our perseverance. Adjusting to the unique vulnerabilities of a small island developing State and the different structural conditions of a middle-income country present challenges of unprecedented magnitude for a country as small as the Maldives.

In spite of these challenges, we aim high and dream big. Our vision of development is inclusive and holistic. A key strategy of President Yameen's Government is investing in youth, including young women, through skills development and job creation. An ambitious new set of policies has been launched to enable women — one half of our population — to become productive partners in national development in whatever capacity they choose for themselves, free from coercion or social pressure.

Our vision of development aims to make the Maldives a resilient, economically diverse, high-income economy. We are aiming for economic transformation, increased investment, and private-sector-led growth. We have intensified our efforts to develop an investor-friendly environment through key legislation and improved macroeconomic stability.

The sustainable development of small island developing States like the Maldives will never be realized unless we make meaningful progress in the fight against climate change. Climate change threatens modern civilization as we know it. It threatens the very existence of many small island developing States. That is why we call on emitting countries to reduce their emissions. That is why we ask that the bold statements be matched with legally binding commitments and actions in Paris later this year.

The 2030 Agenda is a beautifully drafted document. It is an agenda of hope for the hopeless, an agenda to fight poverty and injustice and an agenda that we hope will narrow the gap between the few millions that live in prosperity and the billions that live in poverty. It is an agenda that promises to save my country and more than 40 other low-lying coastal nations from climate calamity; a calamity that, if allowed, would undoubtedly result in the painful demise of those nations.

Ms. Mejía Vélez (Colombia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Yet the new Agenda is still only words on paper. It is our duty to give meaning to those words and to realize the true intention behind every Goal and every target. We can do that only through a commitment to implementation – backing words not only with financial support, but also with capacity-building, technology transfer, a data revolution, and meaningful trade liberalization. Above all, we need an institutional framework that not only bolsters capacity, but takes in account each country's unique characteristics. It is now up to us to make the new Agenda a reality for the future of our people and our common home, planet Earth.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on the Minister for Environment and Water Resources of the Republic of Singapore.

Mr. Balakrishnan (Singapore): Today we celebrate 15 years of significant progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) is built on a solid foundation. The new development Agenda sets out a commendable set of goals. It reflects our most urgent collective aspirations. It also gives us the tools to do development better. No single model of development will be applicable to all countries. Countries will have to choose from the menu in the Agenda in order to find appropriate solutions for their own national priorities and unique circumstances.

Small States, especially small island developing States, are vulnerable and feel the weight of global challenges most intensely. Since more than half of the States Members of the United Nations are small island developing States, we believe that our views, concerns and voices should be heard and should be reflected in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Singapore is both a small island developing State and a city-State. Since we became independent 50 years ago, we have pursued sustainable development. Despite, and perhaps because of, our limited natural resources, we have had to achieve economic growth while preserving a good living environment for our people. Although we have one of the world's highest population densities, we have maintained our greenery and biodiversity, and we have enhanced our citizens' quality of life. This year, we were deeply honoured that our Singapore Botanic Gardens were inscribed as a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization World Heritage Site.

We believe that a dynamic economy, an inclusive society and a sustainable environment are not zero-sum trade-offs. They are mutually reinforcing and help create a virtuous cycle of development. We deem such an approach to be relevant to the 2030 Agenda.

Two factors are key to Singapore's development: first, pragmatism in our governance and implementation, and secondly, partnerships, which have helped to build capacity and develop our own human resources, as well as those of other developing countries that work with us.

Singapore's approach to policy-making and governance is based on pragmatism. We focus on outcomes, not ideologies. Our policies are based on what works — even if they are sometimes initially unpopular or unfashionable.

Take the example of water. Our tiny island is only 700 square kilometres in area. That severely restricts our ability to collect and store water. To diversify our water supply, we have had to expand our water catchment areas so that the entire island is a water catchment area. That has meant systematically cleaning up all our rivers, damming them wherever possible, and improving our reservoirs. We use membrane technology extensively to turn even waste water into high-grade water, which we call NEWater, for both industrial use and indirect potable use. Recycled water is now readily accepted as an integral source of water for our island.

We do not assume that any solution lasts forever. We have to constantly adapt to changing realities. Singapore recently set up a Smart Nation Programme Office. It works across the whole of Government using technology to enhance the quality of life, create more economic opportunities for all and strengthen community bonds in the midst of great diversity. One project, called Virtual Singapore, offers a three-dimensional map of Singapore enriched with multiple layers of data about buildings, land and the environment. Citizens, industry, Government and academia can work together to monitor and tackle climate change and other environmental challenges promptly and quickly. We even use Twitter and social media as a platform. For example, we have 200 smart sensors in our drains, and they automatically tweet if water levels or flood probabilities increase. They are, perhaps, the world's first automatic tweeting drains!

The second factor in Singapore's sustainable development journey has been collaborative partnerships. Given our lack of natural resources, we have had to focus on developing our human capital. We invest heavily in education so as to help our children achieve their full potential and to ensure that our workforce remains constantly updated with the skills needed for the future. As a fledgling nation, Singapore benefited from technical assistance and cooperation from the World Bank and United Nations agencies in the early years of our nationhood. In the 1970s and 1980s, training programmes with companies like Tata of India, Philips of Holland and Sanwa Bank of Japan helped our workers improve their productivity and knowledge.

To play the scenario forward, we started the Singapore Cooperation Programme (SCP) in 1992. Each year, we conduct about 300 courses for approximately 7,000 officials from our fellow developing countries. We welcomed our 100,000th SCP participant in April this year. As a responsible global citizen, Singapore will continue to give back to the international community. Today, I am pleased to announce the launch of a new sustainable development programme under the SCP to support the 2030 Agenda.

Through that programme, Singapore will work with our friends to develop capacity at three levels. First, at the senior leadership level, we will partner with the United Nations Development Programme Global Centre for Public Service Excellence to jointly offer leadership programmes on good governance and public sector institutions. Secondly, at the policy level, we will cooperate with United Nations Settlements Programme, UN-Habitat, to roll out a multi-year programme on sustainable cities and urbanization for 100 cities in the developing world. Thirdly, at the ground implementation level, we will work with partners like United Nations Children's Fund and UN-Water to provide training and consultancy services focused on delivering practical local solutions in the areas of water and sanitation for countries in need.

The unprecedented scale and ambition of the 2030 Agenda require renewed commitment and enhanced partnerships among all stakeholders: States, international organizations, international financial institutions, the private sector and civil society. Many issues of sustainable development cannot be addressed unilaterally.

For example, transboundary haze from forest and peat-land fires in South-East Asia impairs the health of millions of people in the region. It compromises the safety of aircraft and damages our regional economy. The large quantities of carbon dioxide released set back our global efforts to mitigate climate change. The issue is directly linked to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 3, on ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all, and Goal 15, on the sustainable management of forests and the prevention of land degradation and biodiversity loss. While individual countries have been tackling the problem of transboundary haze, we need closer regional and international cooperation in order to apply legal and commercial pressure on errant companies so as to prevent them from profiting from unsustainable land and forest clearing.

The late Mr. Albert Winsemius, the United Nations economic adviser who helped to formulate Singapore's development policies in the early decades of our independence, once said that, as a foreigner, he could advise but could not steer the ship for Singaporeans. The national pride of ownership and the innate motivation of our people are the biggest drivers of sustainable development. We applaud the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for providing our people and Governments around the world with the necessary tools for taking the ownership of our future into our own hands.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq.

Mr. Al-Jaafari (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the people and Government of Iraq, I would like to convey my congratulations to the Co-Chairs on their appointment to preside over this international Summit, which bears the hopes of humankind that we will be able to overcome the obstacles that prevent countries and States from achieving sustainable development in an integrated, comprehensive way. At the outset, I would also like to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who presented a comprehensive briefing on the United Nations role for the next 15 years (see A/70/PV.4).

I have travelled to United Nations Headquarters in New York from my country, Iraq. Ours is a country that has wished to promote democracy, free elections and the participation of all sectors of our country's population, throughout all the various Governments we have had since 2003. Elections have taken place under the supervision of the United Nations.

As a result of the work of the Organization, our world today is different from the world that existed 70 years ago, when the United Nations was created. Despite that, a number of things have remained the same. For example, from the point of view of economics, the provision of basic services and well-being, there remains inequality among States. Those inequalities persist in developing countries and in the least developed countries. Because of obstacles and constraints, a number of States have not yet been able to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Despite the efforts that Member States have made over the past 15 years, we continue to face a number of global challenges that require international efforts. They also require vigorous partnerships backed by strong international financing and oversight mechanisms to measure progress. Among the security challenges at the international level, war and terrorism have turned peaceful societies into societies where poverty, fear, disease and other scourges rage. My country faces ferocious transboundary terrorist attacks. Terrorists generally possess unprecedented financial capacities that threaten international peace and security, thereby undermining the achievements of the MDGs. Thus they are an obstacle to the elimination and eradication of extreme poverty.

My country, Iraq, faces the horror of Daesh and other terrorist groups, and the international community must take into account its special circumstances, which differ from those of any other country. My delegation welcomes the recognition in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) of the importance of peace and security for activities and sustainable development projects in all countries.

Of course, it is difficult to achieve any adopted development objectives, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), without peace and security. We welcome the focus in the SDGs on refugees and displaced persons. Official development assistance can also play a decisive role. It is crucial first and foremost for building infrastructure projects, especially in those countries that suffer from the scourge of conventional warfare or global terrorism, which have undermined the infrastructures of the cities and regions where they rage.

We welcome the bold objectives of the third International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Addis Ababa in July, which demonstrate a good understanding of the challenges facing sustainable development. My country believes that we must achieve the objectives of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development, especially for countries experiencing very difficult security and environmental situations that affect their ability to finance the rebuilding of State infrastructures destroyed by war, terrorism or natural disasters.

We must also take into account the refugee and displaced persons crises.

Strengthening the institutions of the United Nations, particularly the specialized agencies and the United Nations Development Programme, is absolutely essential for the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.

We face transnational challenges. Given their nature, we need a more transparent, harmonious and cohesive world order, based on the individual — on humans, on men and women — so as to ensure that we pool all our efforts for the good of development at the global level. We must also have cohesive and integrated institutions that mobilize governmental efforts to meet threats in a constructive and sustainable way.

My country considers trade and industry key engines for economic development. To achieve their integration into a multilateral trade system, there is a need to facilitate the membership of the least developed countries and the developing States in the World Trade Organization. At the same time, in order to diversify financial sources, we must work to strengthen and bolster national capacities through local industries and exports.

International cooperation in technology transfers and the dissemination of information through social networks are among the most important tools for enabling average citizens to enjoy access to reliable information to fight extremism and terrorism and for strengthening moderate religious thinking so as to fight the type of thinking that sows hatred throughout the world and prevents countries from achieving their potential. We also wish to stress the importance of strengthening national capacities through fiscal regimes that prevent tax evasion and strengthen and expand the tax base.

My country believes that we have to allocate funds to implement the SDGs. Furthermore, monitoring that implementation will require up-to-date digital databases. There is a need to bolster the capacities of developing States in the field of statistics by strengthening their statistical bodies. That would enable them to gather the necessary data and all of the other necessary information.

Iraq welcomes the commitments of friendly States and donors, as well as the United Nations agencies, especially the specialized agencies working in the field of humanitarian emergencies and disasters, by which I mean mainly the refugee crisis, and, of course, the attacks by Daesh, which have emptied our cities and adversely impacted the areas occupied by that terrorist organization.

Our world faces a number of challenges. However, States will have to prevail, with the United Nations at the forefront, for it represents international legitimacy and protects all the peoples of the world.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Al-Jubeir (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): We meet today after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). That post-2015 development agenda is based on our experience in realizing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and on a positive coalition among Governments, international organizations and specialized agencies aimed at fighting poverty and hunger.

My country has made every possible effort in that regard, based on our conviction of the utmost importance of realizing the Millennium Development Goals starting from 2000 and into the reign of His Majesty King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud. We have devoted continuous efforts to realizing the development objectives and have continually increased allocations for that purpose. We have been able to join the list of countries that have registered a high rate of progress and development, and we have become one of the top 20 contributors to development in the world, according to United Nations statistics.

It is extremely important to benefit from the lessons learned in the work for the Millennium Development Goals, which can assist us when we deploy our efforts in the post-2015 period for the Sustainable Development Goals, with their social, economic and environmental dimensions. It is important to note that the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals will remain extremely difficult for people under occupation. Development cannot happen under occupation. We should therefore reiterate the commitments made by the international community in past conferences and summits regarding sustainable and comprehensive development and the need to remove all hurdles standing in the way of people living under occupation, particularly in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, while participating in the Summit and associating itself with its objectives and goals, must make its position clear on certain paragraphs that may contradict, or run counter to, the tenets of Islamic law. The mention of sex in the text means to us exactly male and female. The mention of family means a family that consists of a married man and woman. Any deviations from those understandings would force us to emphasize our sovereign right not to adopt any rules that run counter to Islamic law.

The post-2015 development agenda is extremely important to us. We are committed to its realization for the good of the entire world.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on the Vice Prime Minister of the State of Israel.

Mr. Shalom (Israel): The book of Ecclesiastes in the Bible says: "One generation goes and another generation comes; but the Earth endures forever." We are gathered here today to ensure that generations to come will inherit the promise of a prosperous planet and a sustainable world.

Working in partnership, the international community has achieved extraordinary things. However, much work remains to be done. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) marks a new era of unprecedented global partnership. Today, we dedicate ourselves to combating the greatest global challenge, namely, the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions.

I have witnessed at first hand how determination and innovation can make the desert bloom and society flourish. As a child, I lived with my family in Beersheva, a dry and arid town in the middle of the Negev desert in

Israel. Today, Beersheva — the city of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the capital of the Negev — is a thriving city, home to one of Israel's leading universities and an emerging hub for sustainable technology.

It is hard to believe that from swamplands and sand dunes, Israel has become a source of innovation and creativity, known to many as the "start-up nation". From energy and water to health and education, Israel has developed cutting-edge technologies that turn salt water into fresh water, convert waste into renewable energy and detect preventable diseases with the touch of a button.

In Israel, we have learned to make every drop of water count. Israel is a world leader in water technology, home to one of biggest desalination facilities in the world. We reuse 87 per cent of our waste water, ten times more than most other countries. Drip irrigation was invented in Israel. We have exported that and other innovative technologies to dozens of countries around the globe.

For over 50 years, Israel's Agency for International Development Cooperation has deployed Israeli scientists, doctors, engineers and teachers all over the world in order to share their expertise. To date, Israel has trained over a quarter-million professionals from 132 countries, helping them become agents of change in their own communities. Israel's vision of sustainable development stems from the Jewish principle of "being a light unto the nations", which is well known in the Bible. It is the moral and social obligation to share our knowledge and experience with others, so that no nation has to face the overwhelming challenges of development alone.

Albert Einstein once said: "All that is valuable in human society depends upon the opportunity for development accorded the individual." As we move forward with our new Agenda, we must not lose sight of the individuals in our societies who have been denied an equal opportunity for development. Women and girls constitute half of each of our societies, yet around the world they continue to face deep inequalities in every area of life. We must create a new reality, one in which women and girls can participate on an equal footing with men and boys in their economies, communities and families. Israel strongly believes that sustainable development and the eradication of poverty cannot be achieved without gender equality and women's empowerment.

Youth is also one of Israel's top priorities. People under the age of thirty account for more than half of the world's population, and most of them live in the developing world. As we implement our new Agenda, we must find ways to harness their talent and energy so that they can become the masters of their own future. We need all hands on deck to address the challenges we face. We must give a voice to the unheard and shine a spotlight on the unseen.

There are few regions of the world that can benefit more from the new Agenda than the Middle East. However, as long as the countries of the region choose to invest in violence instead of in their own people, there can be no hope for a better future. Israel's success story highlights the link among development, free societies and prosperous nations. In contrast, the situation in neighbouring countries highlights just the opposite, namely, that the lack of development leads to war, poverty and oppression. Yesterday, the Palestinian Foreign Minister stood here before tne Assembly (see A/70/PV.9) and blamed Israel for all of the ills of their society. That might be surprising if it were not so predictable. After all, it is much easier to point fingers at others than to look at oneself in the mirror.

I look forward to the day when Palestinian leaders place the welfare of their people above warfare with Israel, a day when they stop making false accusations and start making a real effort to improve the lives of their children and future generations. Only when that day comes will they be able to realize the Goals of the new Agenda and enjoy the fruits of sustainable development. Israel has repeatedly extended its hand in kinship and cooperation. Sadly, our hand has all too often been rejected. Today, once again, from this rostrum, I call on our Arab neighbours to forsake destruction and despair and walk together on the path of prosperity and peace.

Tonight, the Jewish people will celebrate the holiday of Sukkot. On Sukkot, families come together to live in temporary dwellings in order to remember the 40-year journey of the people of Israel through the desert towards the Promised Land. As we begin our own journey towards the promise of sustainable development, let us come together so that generations to come will dwell in a sustainable, prosperous, and peaceful world.

The meeting rose at 1.45 p.m.

United Nations A/70/PV.11

General Assembly
Seventieth session

Official Records

11th plenary meeting
Sunday, 27 September 2015, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Lykketoft .... (Denmark)

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

High-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly

Agenda items 15 and 116 (*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

United Nations Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda

Co-Chair Rasmussen: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the United States of America.

Mr. Barack Obama, President of the United States of America, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Obama: Good afternoon. It is a great honour to be here to address the topic of sustainable development. In many of our nations, especially the developed countries, there is among our general population a genuine compassion towards those in need. There is a recognition of the grinding poverty that so many experience every day around the world. And yet sometimes it is said that our efforts to combat poverty and disease do not and cannot work, that there are some places beyond hope and that certain people and regions are condemned to an endless cycle of suffering. Here, today, we put those myths to rest.

Today we set aside the scepticism and lift up the hope that is available to us through collective action. Because the world came together in an unprecedented effort, the global hunger rate has already been slashed. Tens of millions more boys and girls are today in school. The prevention and treatment of measles, malaria and tuberculosis have saved nearly 60 million lives. HIV/AIDS infections and deaths have plummeted. And more than 1 billion people have lifted themselves up from extreme poverty— 1 billion! The entire world can take enormous pride in those historic achievements. Let the sceptics and cynics know: development works. Investing in public health works. We can break the cycle of poverty. People and nations can rise into prosperity.

Despite the cruelties of our world and the ravages of disease, millions of lives can be saved if we are focused and if we work together. Cynicism is our enemy. A belief in the capacity and dignity of every individual and recognition that each of us can play a small part in lifting up people all around the world — that is the message that we are sending here today. Because of the work of so many who are assembled here today, we can point to past success; yet we are also here today because we understand that our work is nowhere near done. We can take pride in what we have accomplished, but we cannot be complacent.

When 11 boys and girls die every single minute from preventable causes, we know we have more work to do. When hundreds of women die every single day just from having a baby, we know we have more work to do. When tens of millions of children are still not in school, when hundreds of millions of people have no

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clean water and no toilets, we have so much more to do. Right now, some 800 million men, women and children are scraping by on less than $1.25 a day. Imagine that. Gripped by the ache of an empty stomach, billions of our fellow human beings are at risk of dying from diseases that we know how to prevent. Many children are just one mosquito bite away from death. That is a moral outrage and a profound injustice. It is literally a matter of life and death, and now the world must act. We cannot leave people behind.

And so today we commit ourselves to new Sustainable Development Goals (resolution 70/1), including our goal of ending extreme poverty in our world. We do so understanding how difficult the task may be. We suffer no illusions of the challenges ahead, but we understand that this is something we must commit ourselves to, because in doing so we recognize that our most basic bond, our common humanity, compels us to act. An impoverished child in a distant slum or in a neighbourhood not that far from here is just as equal, just as worthy, as any of our children, as any of us, as any Head of Government or leader in this great Hall.

We reaffirm that supporting development is not charity, but is instead one of the smartest investments we can make in our own future. After all, it is the lack of development, when people have no education and no jobs and no hope, when they feel that their basic human dignity is being violated, that helps to fuel so much of the tension, the conflict and the instability in our world. I profoundly believe that many of the conflicts, the refugee crises and the military interventions over the years might have been avoided if nations had truly invested in the lives of their people and if the wealthiest nations on Earth were better partners in working with those who are trying to lift themselves up.

As one of the founders of the United Nations, Ralph Bunche, once said,

> "Peace is no mere matter of men fighting or not fighting. Peace, to have meaning … must be translated into bread or rice, shelter, health and education."

I am here to say that in that work, the United States will continue to be the partner of the United Nations. Five years ago, I pledged here (see A/65/PV.11) that America would remain the global leader in development, and the United States Government has in fact remained the single largest donor of development assistance, including in global health. In times of crisis, from Ebola to Syria, we have been the largest provider of humanitarian aid. In times of disaster and crisis, the world can count on the friendship and generosity of the American people.

The question before us, though, as an international community, is how do we meet the new goals that we have set today. How can we do our work better? How can we stretch our resources and our funding more effectively? How can donor countries be smarter, and recipient countries do more with what they receive? We have to learn from the past, to see where we succeeded, so that we can duplicate that success and understand where we have fallen short and correct those shortcomings. We start by understanding that the next chapter of development cannot fall victim to the old divides between developed nations and developing ones. Poverty and growing inequality exist in all of our nations, and all of our nations have work to do. That includes us here in the United States. That is why, in the wake of a terrible recession, my Administration has worked to keep millions of families from falling into poverty. That is why we have brought quality, affordable health care to more than 17 million Americans. Here in this country, the wealthiest nation on Earth, we are still working every day to perfect our union, to be more equal and more just, and to treat the most vulnerable members of our society with value and concern.

That is why today I am committing the United States to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. As long as I am President, and well after I am done being President, I will keep fighting for the education, housing, health care and jobs that reduce inequality and create opportunity here in the United States and around the world, because that is not just the job of politicians; it is work for all of us.

The next chapter of development cannot just be about what Governments spend. We have to get to work to harness the unprecedented resources of our interconnected world. In just a few short years, in the areas of health, food security and energy, my Administration has committed and helped to mobilize more than $100 billion to promote development and save lives. Guided by the new consensus we reached in Addis Ababa, I am calling on others to join us. More Governments, more institutions, more businesses, more philanthropies, more non-governmental organizations, more faith communities, more citizens — all of us must step up with the will and resources and coordination we need to achieve our goals. This must be the work of the world.

At the same time, the next chapter of development must focus not simply on the dollars we spend, but on the results we achieve. That demands new technologies and approaches, accountability, data and behavioural science — an understanding that there are lessons that we have learned and best practices for how people actually live, so that we can dramatically improve outcomes. It means breaking cycles of dependence by helping people become more self-sufficient: not just giving people fish, but teaching them how to fish. That is the purpose of development.

Rather than just sending food during famine — although we have to do that to avert starvation — we also have to bring new techniques, seeds and technologies to more farmers, so that they can boost their yields and increase their incomes, feed more people and lift countless millions out of poverty. Rather than just responding to outbreaks like Ebola — although we have to do that, and we have done so — let us also strengthen public-health systems and advance global health security, so as to prevent epidemics in the first place. As more countries take ownership of their HIV/AIDS programmes, the United States is setting two bold new goals. Over the next two years, we will increase the number of people that our funding reaches, so that nearly 13 million people with HIV/AIDS can get lifesaving treatment. We will invest $300 million to help achieve a 40 per cent reduction in new HIV infections among young women and girls in the hardest-hit areas of sub-Saharan Africa. And I believe we can do that in order to produce a first AIDS-free generation.

The next chapter of development must also unleash economic growth, not just for a few at the top, but inclusive, sustainable growth that lifts up the fortunes of the many. We know the ingredients for creating jobs and opportunity. They are not a secret. Let us embrace reforms that attract trade and investment to areas that are in need of investment and trade. Let us trade and build more together, making it easier for developing countries to sell more of their goods around the world. Let us invest in our greatest resource, our people, and their education and skills. Let us invest in innovative entrepreneurs, the striving young people who embrace new technology and are starting businesses; they can ignite new industries that will change the world. I have met young people on every continent, and they can lead the way if we give them the tools they need.

Our new development goals are ambitious. But thanks to the good work of many of the people in this Hall, they are achievable if we work together and meet our responsibilities to each other. I believe that. The progress of recent years gives us hope. We know what works. We know how to do this. But these days — perhaps because this is now my seventh year of addressing the General Assembly — I tend to be more blunt. Along with the increasingly gray hair, I am becoming more likely to speak my mind. I would like to be indulged when I say that we will never achieve our goals if we do not squarely confront several insidious threats to the dignity and well-being of people around the world. No matter how much hard work is done by development agencies, no matter how large the donations and commitments made by donor countries, if we do not take care of some of the other elements of development, we will not meet the goals that we have set.

Number one, development is threatened by bad governance. Today, we affirm what we know to be true from decades of experience: development and economic growth that are truly sustainable and inclusive depend on Governments and institutions that care about their people, that are accountable and respect human rights and deliver justice for everybody, not just for some. In the face of the corruption that siphons billions away from schools, hospitals and infrastructure into foreign bank accounts, Governments must embrace transparency, openness and the rule of law. Combating illicit finance must be a global effort, because it is part of our development effort. Citizens and civil society groups must be free to organize, speak their minds and work for progress, because that is how countries develop; that is how countries succeed.

Development is also threatened by inequality. That is a political debate that we are having in this country. I therefore want to be clear that it is not something to which the United States is immune. Every country has to grapple with that issue. The wealthiest and most powerful in our societies oftentimes like to keep things as they are, and they often have disproportionate political influence. Inequality is when poor children are more likely to get sick and die than children in wealthier neighbourhoods, just across town; when rural families are more likely to go without clean water; when ethnic and religious minorities, people with disabilities or people of different sexual orientations are discriminated against or are unable to access education and opportunity. Inequality holds all of us back. Therefore, in all of our countries, we have to invest in interventions that allow us to reach more people, because no one should be left behind just because of where they live or what they look like.

Development is threatened by old attitudes, especially those that deny rights and opportunity to women. In too many places, girls are less likely to be in school than boys. Globally, women are less likely to have a job than men and are more likely to live in poverty. I have said that before and I will keep repeating it: one of the best indicators of whether a country will succeed is how it treats its women. When women have an education and when women have jobs, their children are more likely to get an education and their families are healthier and more prosperous. Their communities and countries do better, as well. Every nation, all of our nations, must invest in the education, health and skills of our women and girls.

I have to say that I do not have patience for the excuse: "Well, we have our own ways of doing things". I — we — understand that there is a long tradition in every society of discriminating against women. But that is not an excuse for not taking a new path aimed at making sure that everyone in a society has opportunity.

Development is threatened if we do not recognize the incredible dynamism and opportunity of today's Africa. Hundreds of millions of Africans still struggle in the face of grinding poverty, deadly disease and daily assaults on their lives and dignity. However, I visited Africa recently, and what I saw gave me hope and should, I know, give everyone here hope, because that continent has made impressive gains in health and education. It is one of the fastest-growing regions of the world, with a rising middle class.

During my travels, Africans, especially young Africans, told me they did not want just aid, they want trade. They want businesses. They want investment. I call on the world to join us as we mobilize billions of dollars in new trade, investment and development in Africa. That includes Power Africa, our initiative aimed at bringing electricity and greater opportunity to more than 60 million African homes and businesses. If we get Africa to fulfil its full potential, that will help the entire global economy. Everyone here will be helped. It is not a zero-sum game. We are invested in their success.

Development is also threatened by war. That should be a simple proposition, but it bears repeating. It is no coincidence that half of the people living in extreme poverty around the world live in places afflicted by chronic violence and conflict. Today, some 60 million men, women and children have been forced from their homes, many by conflicts in the Middle East and in Africa. Those are humanitarian crises and refugees that we cannot ignore, and we have to deliver the urgent aid that is needed right now. Those countries that can must do more to accommodate refugees, recognizing that those children are just like ours. But our efforts must be matched by the hard work of diplomacy and reconciliation to end conflicts that so often tear societies apart. As I said earlier, war and conflict are more likely to arise where we have bad governance, high inequality, discrimination against minority and ethnic groups, and low educational levels. Those things are all related.

Finally, development is threatened by climate change. I want to thank the Secretary-General for the extraordinary leadership and work that he has done on that issue. All of our countries will be affected by a changing climate. But the world's poorest people will bear the heaviest burden — from rising seas and more intense droughts to shortages of water and food. We will be seeing climate-change refugees. As His Holiness Pope Francis has rightly implored the world, the issue represents a moral calling.

In just two months, the world will have an opportunity to unite around a strong global climate agreement, for which we are going to be converging in Paris. With President Hollande's leadership and the leadership of every world leader, we need to establish the tools and financing to help developing nations embrace clean energy, adapt to climate change and protect themselves against the false choice between economic development and the best practices that can save our planet. We can take joint action and at the same time. The communities and lives of billions of people depend on the work that we do.

Future generations of young people, watching today and tomorrow, will judge us, based on the choices that we will make in the months and years ahead. One of those young people is Eva Tolage. Eva lives in a village in Tanzania. She is 15 years of age, and she wrote me a letter. Some of those here today know that I read 10 letters a day, mostly from inside the United States, but sometimes from around the world. I actually get 40,000 a day, but I read 10.

Eva told me about her parents, farmers who are struggling to provide for their seven children. This young, 15-year-old girl — a girl of the same age as my daughters — dreams of going to college, but, with little food to eat, she explained, it is hard for her sometimes to concentrate in school. She explained that her house does not have electricity, so it is hard for her to study at night.

That is not because her parents do not love her and do not have ambitions for her. Her father works incredibly hard in the fields in order to pay for her education. But they just need a little help. "I will not let him down. I will do whatever it takes", she wrote in her letter. And then, knowing that we would be gathered at this Summit to help lift up families like hers, she asked me a question that could be asked of all of our nations: What will they commit to doing? What will they do?

There are billions of boys and girls just like Eva. They are just like our children. They have as much talent and as much hope for the future. And they're willing to work hard, and their parents love them just as much as we love ours. Just by the accident of birth, it is so much more difficult for them to achieve their dreams as it is for our children. But in the eyes of God, they are the same children. They are just as important.

For Eva and all those just trying to survive another day under conditions that many of us can barely imagine, it can sometimes seem as if the world is blind to their struggles and their dreams. Today, I say to Eva and the hundreds of millions, billions, like her: "We see you. We hear you." We have read their letters. We commit ourselves as nations, as one world, to the urgent work that must be done, to standing with families like Eva's as they work and strive for a better life, to ending the injustice of extreme poverty, to upholding the inherent dignity of every human being, whatever it takes. We cannot let them down. With the Assembly's help, we will not.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: I thank the President of the United States of America for his statement, strong commitment and leadership.

Mr. Barack Obama, President of the United States of America, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Museveni: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Paraguay.

Mr. Horacio Manuel Cartes Jara, President of the Republic of Paraguay, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Cartes Jara (*spoke in Spanish*): The adoption of the post-2015 development agenda (resolution 70/1) represents the beginning of an ambitious road map for countries in their fight against poverty, with the aim of improving the quality of life of their inhabitants, particularly those who live in vulnerable situations.

One of our Government's public-policy priorities has been the fight against poverty. We have made progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, which were adopted in 2000. Since the adoption of those international commitments, we have managed, with effort and perseverance, to reduce by more than 50 per cent the proportion of the population living in extreme poverty. However, we will continue to push forward and focus our efforts on rural areas where the differences are even greater.

Our main goal as a Government is to ensure food security for our population in order to completely eradicate malnutrition. Paraguay has taken decisive steps to guarantee nutritional requirements, relying on family agriculture, and to increase the necessary nutrition that girls and boys receive in order to ensure excellent school performance and a healthy life. In that respect, we have become one of the leading countries in the region, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). With the adoption of a recent law on school nutrition and sanitary control, we have effected significant changes in public policies, such as the establishment of nutrition-oriented benefits and the promotion of family agriculture through simplified procurement. The total State investment in the school food programme has risen to $95 million, providing breakfasts and afternoon snacks to 90 per cent of the student body and school lunches to 15 per cent. We are creating new awareness in our population, mainly among children. An example of that is the drawing by a young eighth-grade student, Lucas Javier Armua, that I am sharing with the Assembly; Lucas was the Paraguayan winner of the regional contest "Feeding the world and caring for the Earth", organized by FAO.

We are aware that there is a direct link between education and development. In that context, we have achieved the universalization and consolidation of primary-school education, and our country will soon achieve the goal of 100 per cent full coverage. In 2014, youth literacy rates were already above 98 per cent, and in that sense, we are just one step from universal literacy, with equity for gender, area of residence and economic condition. Significant progress can also be observed in the school enrolment and the reduction in the gender gap. In that connection, I would like to point out the increase in women's participation from 8 to 17 per cent in the national leadership within the past 15 years.

With regard to under-5 child mortality, by maintaining the downward trend in recent periods, we will achieve the goals we have set for ourselves. By the end of 2013, assisted birth deliveries in health service centres increased to 96.2 per cent on average at the country level. Since June 2014, our Government, with the support of UNICEF, has been carrying out a project for zero preventable deaths. In that context, maternal deaths were reduced by 33.6 per cent, and neonatal deaths were reduced to 2 per cent in the first year of our work through the ongoing training of public-health staff.

We are pleased to announce that Paraguay has achieved the Millennium Development Goals related to access to systems of drinking water supply and sanitation.

The Paraguayan financial system has been strengthened in recent years and now maintains adequate solvency and capitalization ratios. There has been a gradual increase in the access to credit for small farmers. The success of Paraguay's monetary policies has resulted in the lowest levels of inflation in Latin America. That factor, among others, allows Paraguay to have one of the fastest growing gross domestic products in the region. According to a 2014 Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean report, Paraguay ranks second among Latin American countries in terms of the return on direct foreign investment.

Meeting the Millennium Development Goals has contributed to the improved living conditions enjoyed by the inhabitants of our country and our future generations. We know that we still have much to do, but it is good to see that we are heading in the right direction. Today, our Government would like to affirm our commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) with the primary objective of ensuring the welfare of the entire population.

Solidarity and international cooperation are essential if all nations of the world are to achieve harmonious, peaceful, respectful, fair and inclusive coexistence. We know that the Sustainable Development Goals, adopted at this Summit, are ambitious and pose a challenge to the international community. But if we achieve adequate consensus at the international, regional and national political levels, the Goals are fully achievable. The implementation and permanence of public policies, as well as the allocation of sufficient resources in a rational and timely manner, are essential. In that context, we must work to achieve an effective investment of public funds by establishing transparent implementation and accountability mechanisms.

We must not ignore the fervent cry of our Mother Earth to preserve the environment. Climate change is a global issue and a central challenge to all Governments and inhabitants of the world.

The Republic of Paraguay welcomes the holding of this Sustainable Development Summit, which coincides with the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations. One of the key points in the 2030 Agenda deals with the case of countries confronting special conditions. In that regard, the international community has pledged to take concrete actions to overcome the obstacles facing land-locked developing countries. The Agenda will be transformative for those countries to the extent that their specific needs and challenges are incorporated into the programmes of work of the relevant international organizations, international financial institutions and, not least, those of the transit countries. We are also convinced that new possibilities can emerge from the difficulties we are facing — particularly in the areas of infrastructure, logistics and integration. It also pleases me to mention that at the General Assembly of the Organization of American States, held in my country in 2014, members approved the Asunción declaration on development with social inclusion, which is currently being implemented.

The Government of Paraguay is committed to implementing the new post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda and will comply with its procedures for monitoring and review at the national, regional and global levels, which will help it to be inclusive, transparent, rigorous and based on reliable and timely information. It is in times of great challenges that we need to embrace more than ever our fundamental values and principles and never forget that the raison d'être of Governments must be the dignity of the people, enshrining their well-belling as the ultimate goal of all of our efforts. In that process, we honour our people and pave the way for generations to come.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: I thank the President of the Republic of Paraguay for his statement.

Mr. Horacio Manuel Cartes Jara, President of the Republic of Paraguay was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the French Republic.

Mr. François Hollande, President of the French Republic, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Hollande (*spoke in French*): What the international community has done today in adopting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution A/70/1) is undoubtedly one of the most decisive acts in the history of the United Nations, for we have made a commitment to future generations to set the fight against poverty, human development and protecting the planet as our one indivisible goal. The road to the adoption of the new Agenda has been a long one. Twenty-eight years ago, the World Commission on Environment and Development entrusted Ms. Gro Harlem Brundtland with the preparation of a report entitled "Our Common Future", and with it, sustainable development first became an issue. Five years later, we held the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro, which proclaimed the commitments that the world was supposed to undertake but that, unfortunately, were not, for too long, backed up by actions.

It has therefore taken 28 years for us to finally adopt together, here and now, the Sustainable Development Goals. It has taken 28 years for this notion of sustainable development to take shape in the form of a concrete and universal road map, with goals and targets. It has taken 28 years of perseverance to end the divisions that sometimes arise among us, to overcome our lack of foresight and our narrow self-interest and to ensure that as 193 nations, we — from all corners of the Earth — can arrive at consensus on these Goals. I would like to commend not only the United Nations, but also the States, the Governments and, especially, the non-governmental organizations and civil-society organizations that contributed to that awakening. They exerted the necessary pressure in order for us to reach this point. Instead of furnishing proclamations, declarations and mantras, they have provided us with Goals contained within an Agenda and a road map.

What is at stake is the fight against inequalities on a global scale. In 2015, 1 billion human beings continue to live on less than $1 a day. In the world, one in nine people suffer from hunger, and 250 million children — undoubtedly even more than that — do not know how to read or write. Entire regions are suffering not only from the effects of desertification but also from disease, which has led to an ever-increasing number of refugees, and that at a time when we are already talking a great deal about refugees, because of their great number coming from the Middle East or Africa and entering into Europe.

I would like to recall today what for many representatives is self-evident: 80 per cent of refugees — whether they are refugees because of climate change, war or hunger — are being received in the countries of the South. The South is showing its solidarity with the South. Frequently, the countries with the fewest resources are the ones who are accommodating the poorest refugees. That is the reason that we have to act, why we have to decide. The adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals is not simply a question of wanting to live better; for many, those who are affected by poverty or climate change, the stakes are higher: life or death. What we have decided does not concern quality of life issues but life itself. That is why the 2030 Agenda is a monumental response to what is for us ultimately the main issue at stake for the cohesion of our planet. We have chosen 17 Goals, but there are three indivisible priorities. The first priority concerns the protection of the climate, which will be the central theme at the Conference of the Parties in Paris that France has undertaken the responsibility of hosting.

I had lunch with the main Heads of State and Government of the largest continents. We wanted to determine whether or not an agreement on climate change was possible. There was no Head of State or Government who said that he was against an agreement. I could swiftly conclude, therefore, that we are sure to meet with success. That is not just my opinion alone. An agreement is always possible. The question being put to us is, what kind of agreement? How far-reaching should it be? How many commitments should it contain?

In Paris, we will not be signing a text simply because we were not able to do so in Copenhagen in 2009. No, the text we sign in Paris will be one that we will honour for decades to come. It will be an agreement affecting all countries in various situations. It will be legally binding and ensure that regularly every five years we will be able to evaluate and measure what has or has not been achieved. The aim is to prevent the planet from heating up by more than 2°C by the end of the century. For many countries, if the planet warms by more than 2°C, it will not just be a target that has not been achieved or a Goal that has been missed. No, it will quite simply mean that the countries we refer to as small island developing States will disappear by the end of the century. For many other countries, it will mean that desertification and deforestation will continue, and their people will, as a result, not be able to live as they do today.

It is for that reason that, in Paris, we will need to make commitments through contributions. I call on all countries to make their contributions, so that we can bring together all of the commitments and ensure that there is an increase of only 2°C by the end of the century. We will need to ensure that a decision is taken on establishing a carbon tax and that all economic stakeholders adapt their behaviour and their investments in line with the tax. We will also need to address the issue of financing, and that is a major issue. Are we, as developed countries, simply feeling remorse about the way in which we have used our natural resources? Are we trying to ensure that developing countries do not suffer the same disastrous fate? Or rather, are we going to raise funding in order to allow some countries to skip a step, ensure their energy transition, adapt their technology and make a technological leap forward? That would help them achieve more growth at home and contribute fewer greenhouse gas emissions across the planet.

We are familiar with the figures. They were established in Copenhagen in 2009. We need to find $100 billion a year to ensure that the necessary changes occur and that we set that goal as part of our development policy. I would urge each country to exert as much pressure as possible, so that, in Paris, and at the annual meetings of the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund in Lima next month, we can achieve the target of $100 billion to ensure energy transition and combat global warming. As we set that objective as a priority, it must, at the same time, be consistent and compatible with combatting poverty. The fight against hunger, disease and difficult access to water and natural resources is part of the same fight. The funding for energy transition and the financing that we mobilize during the Paris Conference will also enable us to combat poverty and take action to promote growth and development.

I also know that we will have to take specific actions to combat AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. France is ranked as the world's second largest health-care donor, of which it is very proud. During the Ebola outbreak, when Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea were affected by the disease, it was because of international action and humanitarian organizations that we were able to eliminate that scourge and, today, we can be proud of and commend those countries that made the efforts needed to make that a reality. Ebola has been vanquished in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea. We are therefore able to act and we must act.

The third fight for us is also linked to the previous ones. We do not just want to live on a planet whose temperature is no longer rising. We do not just want there to be fewer inequalities. We want human beings to enjoy their rights. We want women to be able to contribute to wealth creation, we want fundamental freedoms to be recognized, we want the fight against corruption to be undertaken and conflicts to be resolved.

All of those desires are outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals. We are not just talking about reducing inequalities. We are talking about living differently in this world. In order to implement those policies, I have already said that we will need resources. I mentioned the financing needed to combat climate change, but just because we are going to do more in the area of climate financing does not mean that we should do less for development financing. That, too, is extremely important. At this session of the General Assembly, we reached an agreement on the Sustainable Development Goals. The Paris Conference on Climate Change will soon be held. They are both linked, one to another, but one does not replace the other. That is why we need to increase official development assistance.

Today, we will ask all those who accept the idea of the Sustainable Development Goals and the new Agenda to increase their development contributions. France always wants to lead the way and set the example, even if that may be demanding at times. France will host the Conference on Climate Change, and it will also call for the highest of standards to be met. It is for that reason that we have decided to earmark €4 billion more for official development assistance from 2020 onwards.

I have also decided to carry out a far-reaching reform of our official development assistance programme with the French Development Agency and the Caisse des Dépôts, a large French financial institution. We will have the largest development bank in Europe, so that we can honour our commitments and not just quote figures that are never respected. We, too, in France, along with the other countries in the Eurozone, have sought to establish a tax on financial transactions. That tax should be introduced at the beginning of 2017. We will do our utmost to ensure that that occurs. A percentage of the tax will be earmarked for combatting inequalities, global warming and large-scale pandemics. That is a commitment I am making before the Assembly today.

We know our enemies. They are known as indifference, carelessness and indolence. They can also be referred to as passive acceptance. There is the idea that there will always be a miracle solution; that the international community will always come to an agrement; that there will be a piece of technology or an invention that will keep us from having to shoulder our responsibilities. No, it is going to be men and women who decide their future and their destiny. Today, after 28 years, we have managed to agree to adopt the Sustainable Development Goals and an Agenda for them. My duty, in December, is to ensure that we can all agree on how to combat climate change and guarantee life on our planet for years to come.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: I thank the President of the French Republic for his statement.

Mr. François Hollande, President of the French Republic, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Museveni: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of Costa Rica.

Mr. Luis Guillermo Solís Rivera, President of the Republic of Costa Rica, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Solís Rivera (*spoke in Spanish*): It is with great enthusiasm that I have come to this historic Summit to adopt the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). I represent a nation that, for many years, has worked tirelessly to achieve the dream of becoming a sustainable society The goals that we are committing to today are grand and ambitious, as they should be. We should dream big and aim high. I am convinced that the decisions we have taken today, and others that we will take in the future, have the potential to turn many of our dreams — the dreams of the Assembly — into realities. As we are on the cusp of implementing this Agenda, I would like to highlight some of the achievements as well as the challenges that still remain for us in Costa Rica.

The fight for equality in Costa Rica dates back to the beginning of the nineteenth century. That dream began to become a reality in 1847, when girls and boys were assured the right of access to our free education system. In 1950, for the first time, women exercised their right to vote in our country, and my predecessor, Laura Chinchilla Miranda, became the first female President of Costa Rica. Moreover, only a few weeks ago, an illustrious former Costa Rican Judge of the International Criminal Court, Ms. Elizabeth Odio, was elected to the presidency of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. Currently, Costa Rica is leading efforts on behalf of those who believe the time has come for a woman to fill the position of Secretary-General.

With this Agenda, we reaffirm that the philosophy of "Yes we can!" and commit ourselves to providing equal access for women and girls to inclusive, equitable and quality education, economic resources and political participation and to the same opportunities as men with respect to employment, leadership and decision-making at every level. We are convinced that the shared social responsibility of men and women constitutes an essential step in empowering women.

Our commitment to technology also dates back to the nineteenth century. In 1884, two years after electricity lit up New York City, San José, our capital, followed suit. In 1940, the Costa Rican Institute of Electricity was founded, and since then it has developed a wide range of sources of renewable energy. Today, the same utility connects over 99 per cent of the national territory to the grid and ensures a dependable supply of electricity at competitive prices in the region.

For more than 200 days, with very few exceptions, Costa Rica has been generating all of its electric power without producing any hydrocarbons. In that regard, we have realized the mantra "Yes we can!", and we now renew our commitment to universal access, based on principles of solidarity, to an affordable, reliable and sustainable energy supply.

Achieving sustainability is therefore not a rhetorical exercise in my country, nor need it be in the rest of the world. In 2002, the first moratorium on oil drilling was announced in Costa Rica. My Government has extended it to 2021.

Today, we are also taking measures to renew our commitment to becoming a carbon-neutral country by 2021. We understand that sustainability covers a broad range of activities, including public transportation, organic and sustainable agriculture and ecotourism, which has been one of my country's main achievements.

We have also decided that "Yes, we can!" will apply to one of the biggest challenges of the 2030 Agenda, which is ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns.

We say "Yes we can!" in relation to promoting peaceful, just and inclusive societies, free from fear and violence. The 2030 Agenda clearly states in its preamble: "There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development".

I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on how we will implement the 2030 Agenda. We in Costa Rica, as we have said here many times before, believe that disarmament is a mechanism that allows us to redirect significant resources to sustainable development. Betting on disarmament is synonymous with betting on peace and a culture of peace and non-violence. The equivalent of $1.776 trillion was spent worldwide on military spending in 2014. The five permanent members of the Security Council are among the top six countries in terms of military spending, and they are the largest producers and exporters of weapons in the world. We call on them as brothers — but we also call on them categorically — to redirect that spending towards sustainable development. I assure them that there is no better way of ensuring the safety of their own countries than by ensuring the sustainable development of the whole world.

Costa Rica is enthusiastically preparing for the national implementation of the 2030 Agenda by incorporating it into our national planning at all levels. To fulfil the need for coordination, we are relying on the National Council on Sustainable Development, which in its institutional management has a fluent relationship with public and private stakeholders. We have studied and learned from the experiences and best practices of other countries in this field.

Costa Rica is a middle-income country, as are many others represented here, and as such have realized that, despite our many advances in various strategic areas, we have not been able to move forward as fast as necessary or in all the areas that would ensure the well-being of our entire population. I reiterate my country's appeal for the Organization to make progress in establishing an action plan for cooperation with middle-income countries. Over 70 per cent of the people living in poverty in the world live in what are inappropriately called middle-income countries — a designation that serves as an excuse for other States to stop cooperating with them — where the challenge of inequality continues and poor income distribution is the first issue to be addressed. We therefore call for better internal coordination and the necessary institutional framework within the United Nations to support our efforts.

Costa Rica also calls for the development of an index to measure the multidimensional nature of poverty, one that includes criteria beyond per capita income. The global challenge to end poverty in all its forms requires the proper instruments, and Costa Rica is committed to their design and implementation. The need for them was supported by various delegations a short while ago, in a high-level meeting organized by my country.

Those proposals for means of implementation should flow from the agreements already reached at the third International Conference on Financing for Development. They should be central pillars for future discussions and should serve in particular as the basis for the strong commitments on climate change that I hope we will make in Paris in December. I would like to congratulate President François Hollande on his leadership in that process, and I welcome President Barack Obama's decision to attend in Paris, after bravely launching his ambitious clean energy plan in August. It is our responsibility to arrive at a major, rigorous agreement in Paris that will genuinely force the world to focus its efforts once and for all on the conservation and preservation of our species. That is crucial and cannot be put off.

Costa Rica has marked out a pathway in which disarmament is critical to achieving sustainable development. On 1 December 1948, the day the Costa Rican army was abolished, the founder of our Second Republic, José Figueres Ferrer, said,

> "To the home of Washington, Lincoln, Bolívar and Martí, today we say: Oh, America, other peoples, who are your children too, offer you their greatness. Little Costa Rica, now and forever, offers you its heart and its love of civility and democracy."

Sixty-seven years later, as we mark the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations and make our commitment to the 2030 Agenda, little Costa Rica would now like, once again, to offer, this time to the whole world, its heart, its love and its commitment to democracy and freedom as a sustainable model that fosters solidarity, education, inclusivity, transparency, justice and peace.

Co-Chair Museveni: I thank the President of Costa Rica for his statement.

Mr. Luis Guillermo Solís Rivera, President of the Republic of Costa Rica, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Museveni: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Ghana.

Mr. John Dramani Mahama, President of the Republic of Ghana, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Mahama: I bring the Assembly warm greetings from the good people of Ghana, undoubtedly the world's friendliest country.

The adoption on Friday of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), which includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), is a major re-dedication of the world to its commitment to fighting the growing inequality, wiping out extreme poverty and tackling the issues of climate change over the next 15 years. The adoption of the new Goals at a moment when the United Nations is turning 70 can provide some hope to the young people of the world that, after decades of existence, the Organization is still alive to the challenges of today.

What we have adopted and now refer to simply as the SDGs is perhaps the most ambitious transformational development agenda attempted in the history of the United Nations. We must tackle the challenges identified in the 17 Goals as a matter of urgency, and we can also seize the opportunity offered by the adoption of the SDGs to tackle the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

In pursuing the SDGs, it is important that we define a new paradigm of development. The current high consumption of the wasteful societies that we classify as developed cannot serve as the model for sustainable development. If the attractions of the big cities of the so-called developed world, such as shopping malls bursting at the seams with all kinds of consumer goods, glitzy neon lighting and fast food franchises, represent the standard for classification as developed, we will need two more planets the size of our Earth to maintain and sustain the human race. The world's resources are not infinite. If we are to attain the objective of a sustainable consumption and production pattern, as provided for under Goal 12, we will have to review the relationship between labour, production and capital.

The path to sustainable development for Ghana and many other African countries has been a difficult one. In the main, we are still producers of primary commodities, while secondary and tertiary processing is done in the developed world and finished goods are exported back to us. If the teeming youth of Africa are to find jobs at home and stop attempting the dangerous crossing of the Mediterranean to enter the greener pastures of Europe, we must review the role that Africa plays in world production. A significant portion of processing and value addition must relocate to our continent.

I stand here at the United Nations and commit to the people of Ghana that I will continue to aggressively and dynamically implement our country's agenda for transformation within the framework of the newly adopted SDGs, in order to build a life of dignity that ensures that no one is left behind. Through the implementation of the agenda for transformation developed by our national development planning commission, we aim to diversify production and exports, be more competitive in international markets, increase the productivity of all our resource inputs and upgrade technologies so as to make our much-anticipated leap out of poverty.

The African Union's Agenda 2063 makes a strong case for integrating our economies on the continent so as to accelerate the pace of transformative change. In order to achieve that, we have to invest in our human capital through education and health care, accelerate infrastructure development so as to link the African economies and address inequalities, while building meaningful relationships with the private sector. A focus on Goals 2 and 7 of the SDGs will provide Africa with the impetus needed to ensure economic growth and transformation.

The "green revolution" has never really taken off in Africa. And yet Africa has a significant proportion of the world's remaining arable lands. With improved seeds, fertilizers, appropriate technology and agricultural extension advice, we can not only increase agricultural productivity in Africa, we can also provide jobs for the growing population of young people on the continent. That would also fit perfectly with the expansion of agricultural processing and agribusiness, in which Africa has a comparative advantage.

The focus on access to sustainable and modern energy in Goal 7 emphasizes the situation in Africa today, where a shortage of power remains a binding constraint on our economic development. As an example, I can cite Ghana, where two decades of consistent positive economic growth have led to an average annual increase in the demand for power of between 10 and 12 per cent. As a result, the demand for electricity has exceeded the supply. To keep our system running, we have had to resort to implementing a load management system. Ghanaians, with their sense of humour, refer to it as *dumso*, which in our local language means "off and on". We have put in place a programme to introduce emergency generation into the transmission system, but we are mindful that we must ensure that we use as many clean energy sources as possible if we are to benefit current and future generations.

The MDGs have been helpful for us. Over the past 15 years they have helped us address socioeconomic inequalities and disparities in national, regional and global development. Since September 2000, the MDGs have always been a core part of Ghana's national development framework. That has helped us make modest but significant progress in the achievement of those Goals. Ghana is, therefore, well positioned and poised to pursue the SDGs in the post-2015 development era.

As one of Africa's fastest growing economies, Ghana's rise to middle-income status has presented us with both opportunities and daunting challenges. With the inspiration and guidance of the SDGs, we are confident of our ability to surmount those trials. We have a vision and a development agenda for the next 15 years and, on behalf of the Government and people of Ghana, I pledge our support and commitment to work towards the achievement of the SDGs and look forward to working with other regional and global partners to make them a reality.

Our world is well endowed with resources and can ensure that every man, woman, child, and every person with a disability or aged person, can live a happy, fulfilled and secure life of hope and promise and not one of poverty and disillusionment. The time for collective action for the progress we all yearn for is now. The implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals will transform our world. And Ghana is committed to their implementation.

Co-Chair Museveni: I thank the President of Ghana for his statement.

Mr. John Dramani Mahama, President of the Republic of Ghana, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Museveni: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the United Mexican States.

Mr. Enrique Peña Nieto, President of the United Mexican States, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Peña Nieto (*spoke in Spanish*): What better way to celebrate the seventieth anniversary of the Organization of the United Nations than by renewing the hope of a future of opportunities for all of the countries of the world? Mexico celebrates the adoption of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda (resolution 70/1), a historic agreement for humanity in support of social inclusion, shared prosperity, environmental protection, respect for human rights and universal peace. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets of the Agenda reflect the will and commitment of nations to address the complex social, economic and environmental challenges of our time.

It is clear that there are no easy solutions or shortcuts for solving the problems of humanity. The positive and lasting changes that are so vital for our present world can be achieved only with responsibility, perseverance and shared work. That is precisely the essence of the 2030 Agenda, namely, to constitute a serious, far-reaching global alliance based on the values and hopes that gave rise to the Organization of the United Nations. This transcendent document is the fruit of an inclusive, constructive and transparent dialogue that gives new life to multilateralism as a transformative force for our civilization.

It has been a great honour for Mexico to take part in the consultative forums and, of course, in the final negotiation on the new Agenda. With pride and satisfaction, my country commends the inclusion in Agenda 2030 of a number of proposals that we put forward: first, the establishment of social and economic inclusion as the guiding principle for the new Sustainable Development Goals; secondly the adoption of a broader definition of poverty, based on a multidimensional focus that, in addition to counting individual incomes, also takes into account people's effective access to fundamental rights such as food, education, health, social security and basic housing services; thirdly, the consideration of gender equality and women's empowerment as cross-cutting factors for development; fourthly, the recognition of the rights of migrants and their positive contribution to the development of their countries, both their countries of origin and their countries of destination; and fifthly, the inclusion of the preservation of biodiversity and the adoption of national commitments to address climate change as key instruments for sustainable development. In keeping with that responsibility, Mexico will host, in 2016, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. Sixthly, the rule of law must be recognized as an indispensable requirement for development.

From this point on, with respect to the definition of the 2030 Agenda, it is up to individual countries to implement the public policies that will allow them to fulfil their Goals and targets. In that regard, Mexico urges all countries to take ownership of the principles that characterize the new paradigm of open government. That, indeed, is what we will propose in the Open Government Summit, which will take place in my country a month from now.

The international community has succeeded in agreeing on Agenda 2030. The challenge now is to achieve its effective implementation. Although the Agenda itself is universal, its full implementation depends on national strategies. With that understanding, Mexico regards Agenda 2030 as a State commitment and as a collective mission. By joining our efforts, will and resources, we will meet its Goals and targets and be able to positively transform the lives of millions of Mexicans, and by so doing, we will also contribute to universal development.

Co-Chair Museveni: I thank the President of Mexico for his statement.

Mr. Enrique Peña Nieto, President of the United Mexican States, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Museveni: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Lithuania.

Mrs. Dalia Grybauskaitė, President of the Republic of Lithuania, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Grybauskaitė: The year 2015 is a crucial one for sustainable development. We are very satisfied with the successful conclusion of the negotiations on the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), which is a transformative and, most importantly, a people-centred document. I hope it will make a lasting impact on our future. The effective implementation of that ambitious Agenda is of central importance. Let me highlight several key issues that are essential for achieving our goals.

First of all, we must focus on ensuring peace and security. Without peace, we will not be able to build resilient societies, eradicate the causes of poverty or meet the expectations of the international community.

Secondly, the essential building block of a prosperous society is democracy. The lack of democracy is the main reason for conflicts, social and military upheavals, economic hardship and other problems. Today, the continuous threat to the development of our Eastern European partners, in particular Ukraine, worries us. The support of the international community, voiced by the United Nations, is needed by those calling for freedom and self-determination worldwide. Democracy and the rule of law should be guaranteed to everyone.

One of the Goals of the 2030 Agenda, our new development agenda, is gender equality, but women are still suffering from basic violence. Therefore, the first step is to guarantee their safety. The second step is to ensure gender equality through national programmes and proper accountability. Strong political commitment on the part of all actors at all levels is crucial in that respect. Furthermore, the international community has to engage more deeply in providing support for building inclusive institutions of good governance.

In order to achieve our long-term Sustainable Development Goals, we also have to react to new issues that arise. For example, the issue of immigration is a challenge that requires the attention of all members of the international community. The effective use of development cooperation can create a strong force for managing immigration flows and addressing the root causes of sudden migration. It is our moral duty to provide a safe haven for those striving but unable to find peace, freedom and democracy in their own countries. There is no doubt that the success of the new Agenda for Sustainable Development depends on how we identify and mobilize all necessary means for implementation.

The final essential issue that has to be addressed is related to responsibility. There can be no opting out. Global partnership means global responsibility. For the next 15 years, sustainable development and cooperation must be built on ensuring peace and security, guaranteeing human rights, including the rights of women and children, gender equality, supporting democracy, and the building of inclusive institutions of good governance.

To conclude, we must not forget that only by joining the efforts of the international community as a whole can we attain effective sustainable development, which is the goal we would like to achieve.

Co-Chair Museveni: I thank the President of the Republic of Lithuania for her statement.

Ms. Dalia Grybauskaitė, President of the Republic of Lithuania, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Museveni: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of Montenegro.

Mr. Filip Vujanović, President of Montenegro, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Vujanović (*spoke in Montenegrin; translation provided by the delegation*): It is my great honour to address the General Assembly at this Summit, which represents a historic milestone in the work of the United Nations. At the outset, I would like to express my gratitude to the Permanent Representatives of Ireland and Kenya, the facilitators of the intergovernmental negotiations process that resulted in the harmonization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). We believe that the new Agenda, covering the next 15 years, will enable us to fulfil the projected vision aimed at ensuring sustainable development and human dignity for all.

The year 2015 is crucial for the future work of this Organization. It is also the year in which we mark the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. I believe that there is no better time to consider what has been achieved so far in all areas of activity of the United Nations. Moreover, we can be satisfied with the progress achieved in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and with the harmonization of the ambitious and comprehensive, but also realistic, 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Montenegro strongly supports the adoption of the new post-2015 development agenda. We confirm our commitment to implementing it completely. An extremely demanding task of implementation, monitoring and review of the progress achieved is before us. We believe that in fulfilling that task we need to follow the basic principles of inclusiveness, empowerment, transparency and respect for human rights. We have advocated for the creation of a transformative agenda based on the principle of respect for human rights and believe that the universal respect for human rights will be the measure of our success in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We commend the central role played by the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, which will follow up on and review the implementation of new Agenda at the global level, The Sustainable Development Goals that have been set raise a wide range of interrelated issues and challenges. We are of the opinion that each country is responsible for its own social and economic development. National strategies for sustainable development should, therefore, be based on the approach that the production of goods and services is crucial to improving the material and spiritual well-being of the population and requires sustainable management of the four basic groups of national resources, namely, human, social, natural and economic resources.

Key national resources must remain viable so that we can preserve the right to development for each next generation. The right to development should be seen in relation to humankind, relevant social groups at the national and local levels, and families, along with family values. In essence, sustainability requires that we undertake consistent political actions focused on the development of human resources, on stimulating investments focused on those objectives and on preventing decisions that diminish national resources.

National strategies for sustainable development supported by integrated national financial frameworks operating in the international economic environment must be strengthened through effective mechanisms.

Therefore, in the process of their development and implementation and in the establishment of a framework for monitoring and accountability, close cooperation with all stakeholders is necessary at all levels, including in parliaments, the civilian and business sectors and academia. An inclusive approach is a prerequisite for the success of the implementation of our future development agenda.

We believe that the implementation of the new post-2015 development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, as reflected in the final document adopted at this Summit, must be achieved as part of a revitalized global partnership for sustainable development and supported by specific policies and actions, as identified in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development, which should serve as an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Montenegro's commitment to a policy of sustainable development cannot be questioned. Its strategic development policy and guidelines touch upon all dimensions of socioeconomic development. Throughout the past two decades, Montenegro has maintained its Constitutional decision to consider itself an ecological State and has exerted the political will, dedication, persistence, courage and substantial financial investment to bring that about. That approach was particularly significant in helping us to overcome the negative trends that emerged during the transition period and later during the global economic crisis. Although we have faced numerous challenges, we in Montenegro have consistently worked to make our socioeconomic development more sustainable and preserve our natural resources for future generations. Montenegro was one of the first countries in South-Eastern Europe to established a strategic and institutional framework for sustainable development in accordance with the standards of the developed countries of the European Union.

Guided by our own experience in implementing sustainable development policies and through our membership in the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals and our participation in the intergovernmental negotiations, we have made a significant contribution towards the consensus reached on a transformative, universal and comprehensive agenda that integrates the social, economic and environmental aspects of sustainable development. We are pleased that many of our priorities have been included in the new Agenda. As a result, the fulfilment of the vision of the 2030 Agenda will require substantial efforts in the areas of eradicating poverty and inequality and creating peaceful, just and inclusive societies based on the rule of law and good governance at every level.

Conscious of the importance of implementing the 2030 Agenda, we are already in the process of drafting a new national post-2015 sustainable development strategy that will incorporate the Sustainable Development Goals and harmonize them with our national framework. Through our policies, which are to be based on our post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals, we will encourage the participation of individuals, families and social groups, while at the same time ensuring the sustainable and integrated conservation of our human, social, natural and economic resources.

This Summit on the post-2015 development agenda was preceded by the third International Conference on Financing for Development held in Addis Ababa, at which we adopted the outcome document establishing a financial framework for sustainable development. The new Agenda provides us with strong momentum for intensifying our efforts at the end of 2015 to adopt, in Paris, a comprehensive, ambitious and legally binding agreement on climate change that is applicable to all countries. We believe that by year's end we will have reached an agreement on climate change that will be another acknowledgement of the responsibility and willingness of all countries and stakeholders to meet their obligations under a new chapter in the history of development. In that regard, Montenegro is ready to support a strengthened global climate agreement by reducing its national greenhouse-gas emissions by 2030 by 30 per cent compared to their 1990 levels.

The post-2015 development agenda gives us the hope that we can build a peaceful and prosperous world. We all share responsibility for its implementation. We are the generation that can and must make every effort to fulfil the vision of our 2030 Agenda.

Co-Chair Museveni: I thank the President of Montenegro for his statement.

Mr. Filip Vujanović, President of Montenegro, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Museveni: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of Solomon Islands.

Mr. Manasseh Sogavare, Prime Minister of Solomon Islands, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Sogavare (Solomon Islands): The Solomon Islands welcomes the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). The new Agenda is about people and seeks to pursue prosperity through partnerships, while operating within safe levels of our planet's capacity. We are committed to implementing the 17 transformative Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their 169 targets within our national context and circumstances. This historic Agenda presents a new and ambitious framework for sustainable development that requires us to act urgently to reverse our current unsustainable global consumption and production patterns. We must, therefore, seek new ways of doing business and measuring wealth that are linked to guaranteeing the survival of humankind. In that regard, the Sustainable Development Goals must remain people-centred.

The overarching objective of the Sustainable Development Goals is not just to eradicate poverty; it is also about healing the declining health of our planet. Preserving life on Earth must be our shared responsibility, for prosperity cannot be pursued in a dead environment. The 17 time-bound Sustainable Development Goals must now become a highway for global partnerships and be matched with sufficient resources, if we are to meaningfully transform our peoples' lives.

As a small island developing State (SIDS), the Solomon Islands remains a special case in the area of sustainable development, given our vulnerability to climate change and our unique characteristics, which require special attention from the global community. We are committed to delivering on sustainable development nationally under the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway (resolution 69/15) and the Istanbul Programme of Action, which can enable SIDS and least-developed countries (LDCs) to leapfrog from development to sustainability.

The Solomon Islands will be reviewing its cooperation programmes to ensure that they are aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals in the context of our national priorities. We will incorporate the Goals into our 20-year, 2016-2036 national development strategy by the end of this year or in the first quarter of the next. We therefore call on all our development partners to support our efforts.

In the area of sustainable energy, the Solomon Islands is currently working on two hydro projects with the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. Both projects remain on our post-2015 agenda. We are also seeking partnerships so that we can make progress on other hydro projects and also realize our potential in the area of geothermal and wind energy. Currently, 85 per cent of the population of Solomon Islands is not connected to the energy grid. We need partners to invest in large-scale, game-changing energy projects in our rural areas that can open up opportunities for our population and free up the one third of our national budget that is spent on importing fossil fuels.

With regard to agriculture, we call on our development partners to assist us in integrating our rural sector into the mainstream economy and in ensuring that it enjoy its fair share of the global market. Building a resilient economy for the Solomon Islands will require significant international cooperation with our efforts to construct an environmentally sound infrastructure in the areas of energy, transportation, communication, agriculture, tourism and information and technology.

The new 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the agreement on climate change that we hope to see concluded in Paris in December are intricately linked to sustainable development. On climate change, the science is clear; we are heading towards a global temperature increase of between 3°C and 3.5°C. That will leave the small island developing States and the LDCs behind, unless those with historical responsibility for causing the climate change do more and submit ambitious mitigation commitments under their intended, nationally determined contributions. In the lead-up to the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris, I should remind us all once again of the Suva Declaration on Climate Change, issued by the Pacific Islands Developing Forum, which calls for stabilizing the increase in global temperatures at a level well below 1.5°C. The outcome agreement of the Paris Conference should be ambitious, comprehensive and legally binding, with agreements on loss and damage issues anchored in it as a stand-alone chapter.

Let me close with the words of the late Nelson Mandela, "Poverty is man-made and can be eradicated". To that I would add that climate change is also man-made and can be reversed.

We are here to make history. To that end we must provide honest and quality political leadership that secures and guarantees hope for our people and our planet. Let us go forward and urgently get on with the task of creating a better future for our children, their children, and generations to come.

Co-Chair Museveni: I thank the Prime Minister of Solomon Islands for his statement.

Mr. Manasseh Sogavare, Prime Minister of Solomon Islands, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Musveni: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the President of the Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Mr. Nikola Gruevski, President of the Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Gruevski (Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia): We are gathered at this Summit to adopt a bold and universal agenda for ending poverty, improving the well-being of citizens and protecting our planet. I would like to pay tribute to all Member States and other relevant actors that have worked tirelessly on the outcome document that has now been adopted: "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (resolution 70/1). The 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets will be our guiding light in crafting the future for our countries and citizens. The vision for a more stable, peaceful, prosperous, inclusive and environmentally sustainable world can be accomplished only if we join forces and work together in partnership at the global, regional, national and local levels.

The Central European Initiative, over which the Republic of Macedonia currently presides, seeks to be actively engaged in the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda, and its member States have expressed their readiness to make a concrete regional contribution, to transfer know-how and to exchange best practices in designing various sustainable development initiatives, in building the capacities of public institutions and in raising awareness.

The Republic of Macedonia contributes actively to those common goals. After the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio in 2012, we began to integrate the principles of sustainable development into our national policies. We established a National Council for Sustainable Development and adopted a national sustainable development strategy. In July, we conducted a review of our progress in implementing the strategy, the results of which have been communicated to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Division for Sustainable Development.

The next step will be to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals into our strategic documents, including our sustainable development action plan. We expect to receive support for that process under the new United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2016-2020, which is being developed in consultation with all relevant stakeholders. The Government consulted non-governmental organizations and took their views into account when we answered the United Nations questionnaire relating to the preparation of the Secretary General's initial input to the Open Working Group.

We have increased social transfers for socially vulnerable persons by over 50 per cent; special financial benefits have been introduced and even increased for the most vulnerable categories, especially for children without parental care, and we have exempted private-sector employers from payroll taxes for the employment of such persons for a period of five or more years. As a result of foreign investment and support for the private sector, unemployment in our country has been reduced by over 11 per cent. The concept of free health care for every citizen has been introduced. We are investing in medical equipment and infrastructure, and the prices of pharmaceuticals have been reduced. In addition, we are financing farmers through high budgetary subsidies.

With respect to young people, the education budget in recent years has been between 5 and 6 per cent of gross domestic product, which is on a par with the level of countries in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. In the area of primary education, we have implemented the Cambridge Primary Science and Mathematics Curricula. English language instruction starts in first grade, and a second foreign language begins in the sixth grade. We have provided a computer for every child in primary and secondary schools, as well as 80 modern laboratories for the development of scientific research. We offer full scholarships for each citizen who manages to enrol at one of the top 100 universities in the world.

For the employment of people under the age of 35, the State pays contributions for social insurance and personal income tax. In line with Sustainable Development Goal 5 on the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, we are committed to eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls, especially to ending human trafficking, for which we have received the highest assessment from the international sources. We are improving the economic status of women through special programmes for the financing of women in the job market, the employment of single mothers, the extension of maternity leave and special protection for employed mothers and the promotion of the increased participation of women in political life, as well as measures to promote sexual and reproductive health.

Even taking into consideration that there should be a difference in the responsibilities of countries at different levels of development, as well as a fair distribution of the burden of sustainable development, especially in the area of climate change and pollution, each country should find its own strengths and bear a fair share of the burden for its own development. Let us deliver together what we jointly have committed to today for the future we want. The seventieth anniversary of the United Nations obligates us, even more, to perform better.

Co-Chair Museveni: I thank the President of the Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for his statement.

Mr. Nikola Gruevski, President of the Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Museveni: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of Japan.

Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Abe (Japan) (*spoke in Japanese; English text provided by the delegation*): Our joint international efforts over the years to realize sustainable development have culminated in this historic adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The new Agenda contains five key elements known as the five Ps: people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership, at its core. It also forges an ambitious plan of action in various fields including women, health, education, disaster risk reduction and quality growth. Based on those core components, which have all been emphasized by Japan, the new Agenda will lead our efforts in ultimately eradicating poverty from the earth and transforming the world into a sustainable planet by 2030.

Japan proposed international development goals as early as the 1990s and has consistently contributed to that endeavour. Japan therefore sincerely welcomes the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. I would like to express my respect for the efforts made by all those who worked so hard to bring the process forward. In order to implement this new, universal Agenda, we must overcome the traditional North-South dichotomy; we must work together to instead build a new global partnership where all stakeholders, including all countries, the private sector and civil society, join forces and play their respective roles. Such a partnership should also be one in which women, people with disabilities and the young proactively participate.

I would like to reiterate that Japan, as part of that partnership, will put forth its best possible effort, together with the international community, to implement the Agenda. For the past 60 years, Japan has continuously contributed to the stability and prosperity of the international community by providing official development assistance amounting to approximately $330 billion in total, and by accepting 560,000 trainees and dispatching 190,000 experts and volunteers. Building upon those achievements, Japan will promote the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. We will carry that effort forward by applying the Development Cooperation Charter of Japan as a compass, which was newly established this year as a foundation for Japan's development cooperation. In particular, we will do so based on the concept of human security, the guiding principle of the Charter of the United Nations that focuses on each and every individual.

In order to promote the Agenda, Japan will first pursue various initiatives to achieve quality growth, by which we specifically mean inclusive, sustainable and resilient growth for all, and thereby to end poverty. To achieve that aim, Japan will take a leading role in promoting quality infrastructure investment as a foundation for quality growth — not only in Asia, but across the world including in Africa. Additionally, using development cooperation as a catalyst, Japan will expand partnerships with the private sector in order to mobilize its financial resources and technologies. Furthermore, Japan will promote the development of industrial human resources as a key driving force to achieve such growth, taking advantage of our country's high educational standards and advanced technology.

The second approach that Japan will emphasize is the protection and empowerment of people in vulnerable situations to ensure that no one is left behind. Since the health field is an essential component in that effort, Japan has announced a new global health policy aimed at strengthening health systems to better prepare the international community for public health emergencies such as the outbreak of the Ebola virus disease and to promote universal health coverage in every country. In education, Japan has established a new cooperation strategy, entitled "Learning Strategy for Peace and Growth", that is focused on enhancing learning quality and supporting human resource development in industry, science and technology. In the field of disaster risk reduction, Japan will take a leading role in implementing the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, adopted in March, and calls upon the international community to establish World Tsunami Day at the United Nations to raise global awareness of the risk of tsunamis.

Thirdly, Japan will further strengthen efforts to achieve sustainability in the environment and in society. On the issue of climate change, Japan will steadily implement assistance particularly to the most vulnerable countries and actively contribute to establishing a fair and effective international framework applicable to all parties at the upcoming session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Moreover, Japan will share with the world our renowned knowledge and efforts on building a sound material-cycle society, including the concept of the three Rs: reduce, reuse and recycle.

Last but not least, the Japanese Government's pension investment fund, which operates a $1 trillion pension fund and is the largest such fund in the world, has just signed the United Nations Principles for Responsible Investment, thereby contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. In just three months we will enter into the first year of the global endeavour towards 2030. We must take action immediately to implement the new Agenda.

Let me conclude my statement by reiterating our determination to tackle the important challenge of achieving sustainable development by making the most of the upcoming opportunities next year, such as the World Humanitarian Summit, and the International Conference on African Development, the sixth such conference and the first to be held in Africa.

Co-Chair Museveni: I thank the Prime Minister of Japan for his statement.

Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Museveni: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand.

Mr. Prayut Chan-o-cha, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Chan-o-cha (Thailand) (*spoke in Thai; English statement provided by the delegation*): I have come to this historic Summit to reaffirm that the Government and the people of Thailand stand with the global community in its resolve to realize the new 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda (resolution 70/1). We are pleased that the 2030 Agenda places people at its core, for people are the ultimate agents of change and play a role in sustainable development. Our actions today will determine the survival of future generations.

Today there is no longer any doubt that human activity has been the prime contributor to climate change, the greatest threat ever faced by humankind. Knowing all that we know now, we have a choice to make. We can continue on the path of rampant consumerism and maximum growth at all costs. Or we can choose to live sustainably, with a focus on quality, moderation and balance in our lives. We can choose to respect nature, rather than viewing it merely as a commodity to exploit. What I have just said derives from His Majesty the King's "sufficiency economy" philosophy. The philosophy, with its emphasis on reason, moderation and building resilience, has seen us through several crises, including the 1997 financial crisis and the 2004 tsunami. It also helped Thailand achieve nearly all of the Millennium Development Goals, and it is the basis for our 2015-2020 vision and the forthcoming national economic and social development plan.

Another pressing challenge of our time is inequality. It is the root cause of such problems as poverty, conflict over resources, and irregular migration, which can, in turn, spawn violence. To address inequality, we must first have effective laws. The Thai Government has passed a number of bills, for example, on protecting the homeless, promoting gender equality and providing equitable access to resources and public services. We want to create a level playing field for all, to promote good governance, accountability and transparency in public administration, and to combat corruption and nepotism.

Secondly, the intrinsic worth of each and every human being must be recognized. The Thai Government is working to empower the vulnerable and the disenfranchised. Various measures have therefore been put in place, such as universal health coverage, a national retirement savings fund, an increased monthly allowance for the elderly and the disabled and a subsidy for babies newly born into poor families. We are also striving to strengthen the individual and the family, enhance community involvement and promote social cohesiveness.

Similar support is also provided to non-citizens. Last year, the Thai Government offered social and legal protection to unskilled migrant workers, and over 1.6 million migrants were registered and regularized for employment to protect them from human rights abuses and human trafficking.

Nevertheless, many people still need help. And to reach them, especially the most vulnerable groups, we must improve our statistics and disaggregated data to give them visibility and ensure that their needs are more precisely addressed. At the same time, the social recognition of such groups is also important, and we must build a society that is compassionate, respects humanity and embraces equality.

Thirdly, we need to create an environment that enables and sustains development. To lay strong socioeconomic foundations, the Thai Government has been empowering local communities through the establishment of village funds, including women's empowerment funds, across the country. The funds are used to assist local small and medium-sized enterprises and have been effective in helping to generate jobs and income for the rural masses. The Government is also helping farmers to settle their debts and promoting sustainable agriculture practices and agro-industry through local knowledge sharing and modern technology. While Thailand enjoys full employment, the Government has also been helping low-income people to find jobs through the so-called smart jobs centres.

Fourthly, we believe in reducing inequality, not only within countries but also among them, through development partnerships. We have been working to narrow the development gaps in mainland South-East Asia, starting with our neighbours, by promoting connectivity and setting up six special economic zones along our borders under what we call the Thailand Plus One initiative.

Only when individuals and communities are strong can our nations and the global community discover true strength. In the next 15 years, we should see unprecedented reductions in inequality and poverty. Thailand stands ready to work with all countries and the United Nations to that end for a stable, prosperous and sustainable world.

Co-Chair Museveni: I thank the Prime Minister of Thailand for his statement.

Mr. Prayut Chan-o-cha, Prime Minister of Thailand, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Museveni: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

Mr. Xavier Bettel, Prime Minister, Minister of State, Minister for Communications and the Media and Minister of Worship of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Bettel (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): Being universal, proactive and transparent have never been more imperative principles for the United Nations than today, when news accounts of bloody conflicts are mixed with the sombre warnings of environmental and climate-change disasters.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) represents a singular leap forward. The time for reflection is past; now is the time for action. Our challenge is twofold: to ensure that the 17 new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) continue the momentum of the Millennium Development Goals to eradicate poverty and hunger throughout the world and to permit us to focus joint development efforts on long-term sustainability. That is why we need to rigorously monitor the implementation of those Goals to be able to objectively measure progress in terms of what has been and what has yet to be achieved. United Nations leadership, supported by regional and national efforts, should guarantee the inclusive and interdisciplinary implementation of the Agenda.

Our global environment remains dependent on differing rhythms and speeds. Our resolve for the year

2030 may therefore appear distant to some, whereas it is, in fact, tomorrow. We must make no mistake, the 2030 Agenda is the responsibility of our generation, and future generations will judge us on our ability to act. The transformative power of the Agenda should introduce a new quality to the dialogue among nations. In that context, the updated universality inherent in the common Agenda cannot be realized without the view of shared responsibility and without the ongoing promotion of respect for all human rights and the principles of good governance. As never before, civil society has been urged to participate in the dialogue and the pursuit of the objectives declared in the 17 SDGs.

The old categories of North and South, of developed and developing countries, have become obsolete. Now dialogue among equals on topics that concern all of us will allow us to provide the foundation for a world more egalitarian and interdependent world. We must ensure that the competitive race does not lead to low standards today and to onerous and irreversible consequences tomorrow.

The protection of the environment, the fight against climate change and the integration of social criteria should not be perceived as a threat to industry or as a brake on economic development. Rather, those Goals can contribute to the development of clean technologies and help us to engage in greater diversification of our economies by promoting sustainable growth. Some companies on my continent have noted that other continents have less severe regulation of the environment, so they plan to leave our countries to set up elsewhere. While we often talk about tax and social dumping, we must also act to end such environmental dumping. The cafeteria lunch I had today was crucial, because everyone was committed to moving forward in the same direction. Moving forward in another direction makes no sense at all.

Secondly, we should not forget that the mere scope of the new SDGs compared to the earlier MDGs will require diversified and mutually complementary sources of funding. Official development assistance remains a crucial lever to provide additional capital. Luxembourg encourages all developed countries to invest 0.7 per cent of their gross national income in official development assistance. In that context, I would like to remind the Assembly that, for several years, our national contribution amount has been 1 per cent of our gross national income.

What we say today in this Hall should be the same thing we say in our countries at home. We must honour our international commitments to official development assistance, which must reach 0.7 per cent of the gross national income, and to international climate funding, which by 2020 is to reach $100 billion annually, as decided in Copenhagen in 2009. We must not resort to the notion that charity begins at home and the populist talk that claims we have enough problems to address at home in our countries, so why help other people If we look at ourselves in the mirror and if we are honest, we will admit that what we are complaining about in our home countries is trifling. We are incredibly successful, while in other parts of the world people do not know if they are going to be able to feed their children more than once a day. It is foolish to complain that the water is tepid — not hot or cold enough— when in other countries they are happy to have enough water to be able to survive. So we need to be reasonable. We must look in the mirror and realize that some of the problems we have in our countries are superficial and related to abundance.

Beyond ongoing programmatic efforts, the support of the private sector and its awareness-raising are key when working with public authorities to achieve the Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Goals should complement the picture so that there is no duplication or contradiction. Luxembourg is particularly committed to the respect and promotion of social rights. The 2030 Agenda should be able to guarantee decent working conditions for all. The third International Conference on Financing for Development drafted a number of important paths to follow, and the conclusions of that Conference will serve as an important basis for the implementation of our Agenda. The 2030 Agenda takes into account, not only the increased interconnectedness between different areas in an era of globalization but also the impact of this on the environment and climate. The environmental aspect of sustainability, the conservation of natural resources, the protection of biodiversity and ensuring food security — all such concerns are fundamental in ensuring prosperity and well-being for all.

We must unlock the engines of a "green economy", which for my country means that we do not use nuclear energy. We need to make our economies and our lifestyles more equitable, more sustainable and more effective in eradicating poverty. We are not going to resolve the crisis of poverty and migration without addresssing the challenges posed by climate change and the environment. We will not overcome major crises — migration, wars and hunger — unless we restore dignity to men and women, while respecting the Earth which feeds us.

For a long time now, Luxembourg has focused on a development policy that promotes long-term sustainable results. Inclusiveness is the inevitable corollary of that approach, based on objective analyses, listening to various stakeholders and monitoring that includes the participation of all stakeholders. That is also the best path to follow to ensure the success of the 2030 Agenda and to bring about a truly united world, and one in which humankind is sensitive to the need for integrated harmonious development and eager to preserve our planet and to improve the daily life and dignity for all of us.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: I thank the Prime Minister, Minister of State, Minister for Communications and the Media and Minister of Worship of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, for his statement.

Mr. Xavier Bettel, Prime Minister, Minister of State, Minister for Communications and the Media and Minister of Worship of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury and Minister for the Civil Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The Right Honourable David Cameron, Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury and Minister for the Civil Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, was escorted to the rostrum

Mr. Cameron (United Kingdom): We meet at an important moment. Today, we celebrate the huge progress that the world has made towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and we commit to going even further through the new Sustainable Development Goals. Since the MDGs were adopted in the year 2000 (resolution 55/2), we have made huge strides forward. The proportion of people living in extreme poverty has fallen significantly. Malaria deaths have fallen by 60 per cent since 2000, saving more than 6 million lives. And 43 million fewer children are out of school. I am proud to lead a country that has made a huge contribution to that extraordinary progress.

The United Kingdom's open markets, trade and investment have helped to spur global growth. Our scientists have developed new technologies for the world's poorest. And, crucially, we have kept our promises on aid. We have not just achieved the 0.7 per cent target of the United Nations; we have enshrined it in the law of our land. That investment is helping the world's poorest and most vulnerable people to lead a better life. Children have been vaccinated who otherwise would have died. Refugees have been fed and clothed who otherwise would have starved. Countries were accorded a chance of stability and security that otherwise could have fallen apart. Aid is not enough on its own. Of course not. But it is essential. And it works.

Today, therefore, I call on others to follow Britain's lead. I say to my fellow world leaders from developed countries: we have been making those aid promises for years. Now, let us all deliver on them. The world is watching. And now, as we adopt these new Goals, let us inspire the world with what we want to achieve: to reduce preventable deaths to zero, to eliminate illiteracy and malnutrition and to eradicate extreme poverty within a generation. That is a clarion call to the whole world.

To eliminate the scourge of extreme poverty for the first time in human history is something that has been dreamed of for centuries, something that many thought would never happen, but something that is now within our grasp. I am delighted that ending extreme poverty forever is at the heart of the new Goals. It is something that I pushed hard for. And I am delighted that we have recognized that to end extreme poverty, we need to put the poorest, the weakest and the most marginalized first — to leave no one behind.

But today, together, we commit to going even further. There can be no attack on poverty without an assault on climate change. We therefore commit to making progress in a way that is sustainable and protects our one and only planet for the long term, and treasures and conserves our natural resources for future generations. That is the only way to eliminate extreme poverty forever and to prevent all our progress from being undone by environmental degradation or dangerous climate change.

And there can be no attack on poverty without ending gender inequality. Today, therefore, we commit to a world where women and girls are treated equally with men and boys. And, crucially, we commit to tackling all the causes of poverty. Let us be frank, especially here, about what keeps so many stuck in poverty: corruption, rotten government, no access to justice, no property rights, no rule of law. Today, for the first time, every country in the world is committing to tackling corruption, to promoting the rule of law and access to justice, to reducing illicit financial flows and to strengthening the return of stolen assets.

We are committing to building accountable and transparent institutions and representative decision-making to ensure that everyone has a legal identity and access to information. We are saying that we must protect basic freedoms. For a long time, those issues were off the global development agenda. Now they are right at the top of it, and everyone has signed up. That was one of the key recommendations of the High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, which I co-chaired along with the Presidents of Liberia and Indonesia, in its report entitled "A new global partnership: eradicate poverty and transform economies through sustainable development". I am delighted that it is being adopted here today. Achieving these Goals will take actions, not words. In addition to aid, we need investment, trade, growth and jobs. I therefore urge companies around the world to invest in developing products for the poorest and in new forms of clean energy. And I urge Governments to smash down the unfair barriers that prevent our people from trading freely, starting at the meeting of the World Trade Organization later this year.

And let us go even further. We need a new global partnership to ensure that all our policies — on things like tax, trade and transparency — really help to deliver progress for the poorest. The United Kingdom will lead the way internationally, just as we did leading this Agenda with our 2013 presidency of the Group of Eight.

That is why I have agreed to host a major anti-corruption summit next year, to drive further action. I therefore assure leaders in Government, business and communities around the world that, if they are committed to making progress towards those global goals, the United Kingdom is on their side and will work with them on our shared quest.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: I thank the Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury and Minister for the Civil Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for his statement.

Mr. David Cameron, Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury and Minister for the Civil Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence and Home Affairs, Minister of Rodrigues and National Development Unit of the Republic of Mauritius.

Sir Anerood Jugnauth,Prime Minister, Minister of Defence and Home Affairs, Minister of Rodrigues and National Development Unit of the Republic of Mauritius, was escorted to the rostrum.

Sir Anerood Jugnauth (Mauritius): I am pleased and honoured to participate in this crucial Summit. It marks the culmination of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) era and the transition to the new period of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

For the past 15 years, the MDGs have remained a focus for global policy debates and national policy planning in many developing countries, including my own. There is a broad consensus that they have played an important part in securing substantial progress in fighting poverty. We all agree that a globally endorsed agenda for fighting poverty should continue beyond 2015. In a world already undergoing dramatic shifts, including climate change and other serious environmental ills, there is widespread understanding that global environmental objectives need a greater international emphasis and commitment, alongside those concerned with poverty reduction. The focus is now on building a sustainable world where environmental sustainability, social inclusion and economic development are equally valued.

Mauritius has by and large met the MDGs, especially in the areas of education, gender equality and poverty reduction. We are, however, faced with some emerging concerns and priorities related to the widening of the income gap, unemployment that results from a skills mismatch, demographic challenges and environmental and climate-change issues that can affect the achievement of both the MDGs and the new SDGs.

Mauritius is comforted that the new global development agenda, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), espouses its own sustainable development agenda, one that I laid out at the national level in my Vision 2030 economic mission statement on 22 August. This shared Agenda emphasizes poverty eradication and social inclusiveness as indispensable to sustainable development. It is dedicated to offering a life of dignity to all, through the provision of nutritious food, safe drinking water, good sanitation, affordable and reliable energy, health care, housing, productive employment and decent jobs, quality education, conflict prevention and the rule of law and good governance.

The Agenda is people-centred and guarantees rights, justice, freedoms and access to information. It promotes and supports sustainable oceans, forests, agriculture and land ecosystems and a sustainable climate on Earth. I am here today not only to endorse our new global development Agenda but also to affirm my country's strong political commitment to its timely implementation.

Since climate-related concerns represent real threats to life on our planet, Mauritius looks forward to the adoption of a binding agreement on climate change at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Paris in December. My Government is fully committed to effectively monitoring climate variability and change as well as addressing the problems related to rises in sea levels in coastal regions.

We particularly welcome the inclusion in the 2030 Agenda of a stand-alone goal on the oceans. It is a cause that we have championed in international negotiations. The conservation and sustainable use of the world's oceans, including the high seas, is very important to the well-being of humankind. Mauritius plans to develop its ocean economy as one of the pillars of its sustainable development path. Given the vital role of the oceans, reducing water pollution and protecting marine ecosystem services and biodiversity are imperative.

As a small developing island, we believe it is urgent that the global community take into account the specific vulnerabilities and challenges of small island developing States (SIDS). We must address the supply-side constraints on SIDS in order to ensure their integration into the global trading system, and we must adopt a pragmatic approach with regard to the question of special treatment in the areas of financial access to climate funds and technical assistance for SIDS, as well as trade. We firmly believe that SIDS should be granted special international recognition within the United Nations system.

Achieving a comprehensive post-2015 development agenda will above all require a comprehensive framework for its financing, among other means of implementation. It is clear that the current financing and investment patterns will not deliver on the Goals. To achieve the SDGs, it is important that we increase and rationalize overseas development assistance and financial flows, as well as mobilizing new and additional resources for developing countries, including SIDS, from multiple sources. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda, adopted at the third International Conference on Financing for Development, has laid the foundation for strong support to the realization of the SDGs. Its inclusion in the means of implementation provides concrete deliverables that set the tone for the process. And we particularly welcome the annual high-level meeting of the Economic and Social Council on financing for development, aimed at reviewing the outcomes of the Conference and the means of implementation for the post-2015 agenda.

We also note with satisfaction the convening by the Secretary-General of an inter-agency task force to report on progress on both financing for development and the SDGs. Mauritius greatly appreciates the establishment of a technology facilitation mechanism, designed to identify technology needs and gaps and facilitate the dissemination and transfer of technology relevant to the SDGs. That is crucial for my country, since the next phase of our socioeconomic development will be driven by technology and innovation.

The achievement of the SDGs will require close collaboration between Governments, the private sector and civil society. The contribution of international organizations and multinational companies, with their worldwide reach, cutting-edge technologies and massive capacity to reach large-scale solutions, is essential to success. The SDGs will require an unprecedented mobilization of global knowledge operating across many sectors and regions.

My Government is fully committed to implementing the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, and we urge the international community to support developing countries so that they can deliver. It is with great hope and expectations that Mauritius endorses the document.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: I thank the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence and Home Affairs, Minister of

Rodrigues and National Development Unit of the Republic of Mauritius for his statement.

Sir Anerood Jugnauth, Prime Minister, Minister of Defence and Home Affairs, Minister of Rodrigues and National Development Unit of the Republic of Mauritius, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey.

Mr. Ahmet Davutoğlu, Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Davutoğlu (Turkey): We have gathered to celebrate a historic event, as we adopt an ambitious and universal sustainable development agenda. Together, we are making a pledge to transform the world for the better in the next decade and a half. Humankind faces complex and interlinked challenges. Continuing poverty, ever-deepening inequalities, climate change and other forms of environmental degradation, global health threats, spiralling conflict, violent extremism, terrorism and the consequent humanitarian crises — including the displacement of unprecedented numbers of people seeking refuge — threaten our well-being and our planet's future. On the eve of the new millennium, we agreed on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Since the adoption of the MDGs, significant progress has been made to reach those Goals. Unfortunately, progress has been uneven among and within countries, and some of the Goals still remain off-track.

That is why we must all commit, without reservation, to the new Global Agenda that we are proclaiming today (resolution 70/1). It is particularly important that the 2030 Agenda build upon the achievements of the MDGs and address the unfinished business. Turkey strongly supports the emphasis on providing scaled-up assistance to the least developed countries and other most vulnerable countries. That will help to fulfil our pledge of leaving no one behind.

Crucially, the 2030 Agenda recognizes what we have been witnessing for years: sustainable development cannot be realized without peace and security, and peace and security will be at risk without sustainable development. The humanitarian crisis in the Middle East is a case in point, for it is a humanitarian tragedy caused by oppression, as well as lack of security and stability. We are hosting more than 2 million Syrians in Turkey, 960,000 of whom are children. For those interested in the facts, 66,000 Syrian babies have been born in camps in Turkey. Our country has spent almost 8 billion dollars for the refugees in camps, with a very modest contribution from the international community.

We cannot reach our Sustainable Development Goals without first addressing complex humanitarian emergencies. That is why a greater emphasis on the humanitarian-development nexus is strongly needed. And that is why Turkish humanitarian diplomacy combines humanitarian and development assistance programmes within a collective strategy, with an eye to the countries in sub-Saharan Africa, in particular. The World Humanitarian Summit will be held in Istanbul on 23 and 24 May 2016 and will provide an excellent opportunity to assess the degree of coherence between financing for humanitarian assistance and financing for development assistance.

Turkey will also host the eighth meeting of the Global Forum on Migration and Development in October this year. There we will discuss the implementation of the migration-related targets and indicators included in the Sustainable Development Goals. The new Agenda supports the implementation of the relevant programmes of action, including the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries. As the co-Chair of the Group of Friends of Least Developed Countries, Turkey will continue its strong support to the least developed countries.

We will host the mid-term review meeting of the Istanbul Programme of Action in June of 2016. We count on the support of United Nations Member States for the success of this meeting. Turkey has also offered to host the proposed Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries and the science, technology and innovation supporting mechanism dedicated to those countries. We are looking forward to the report of the High-level Panel of Experts, which will advise on organizational and operational aspects of the proposed Technology Bank.

The real measure of our success with respect to the new and ambitious Development Agenda will be the concrete steps we take in the implementation phase. That is why there must be a paradigm shift, in order to unlock the resources needed to finance the Sustainable Development Goals. The 2030 Agenda provides some of the answers to that question, by incorporating certain necessary means of implementation. Those means are complemented by the Addis Ababa Action

Agenda, which was adopted at the Third Conference on Financing for Development. The outcome of the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Paris in December, will add another link to the chain. Those three outcome documents will establish the framework of the Global Development Agenda for the next 15 years.

Combating climate change and achieving sustainable development are closely linked. We, in Turkey, will integrate the Sustainable Development Goals and targets into our national development plans.

With respect to the Group of 20 (G-20), Turkey has placed development at the centre of its G-20 presidency agenda for 2015. Promoting the integration of low-income developing countries into the world economy is one of its top G-20 presidency priorities. We have worked very hard to ensure close alignment between the G-20 agenda and global sustainable development efforts to end poverty, hunger and inequality and to promote infrastructure investments, food security, access to energy, youth employment, gender equality and inclusive economic growth, while protecting the planet. The G-20 is working to assist low-income developing countries.

Official development assistance (ODA) remains key to supporting development efforts in many countries, particularly the least developed countries. As an emerging donor, Turkey has expanded the geographical scope of its development cooperation and steadily increased the amount of its ODA in recent years, which has increased from $967 million in 2010 to $3.5 billion in 2014. That amount corresponds to 0.45 per cent of our gross national income, and we are committed to further increasing our contributions. Yet, enhanced cooperation between the public and the private sector to support sustainable development is also critical. That is why the Turkish G-20 presidency has made the role of the private sector in development — with a focus on inclusive business — part of the G-20 development agenda. We will continue to encourage efforts in that direction. At the G-20 Summit that Turkey will host in Antalya this November, G-20 leaders will discuss in detail the Group's contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Actions speak louder than words. We, the leaders of nations from across the world, have come together to adopt the 2030 Agenda in this august setting. It is a very important step that lifts humankind's hopes for a better future, one in which no one is left behind. Today, we are making a pledge to future generations, and it is only by working together that we can honour that pledge. We, in Turkey, are resolved to make our contribution and to fulfil our commitment.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: I thank the Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey for his statement.

Mr. Ahmet Davutoğlu, Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey, was escorted from the rostrum.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: At this point, I should like to inform delegations that we will now hear brief presentations by the co-Chairs of the interactive dialogues.

I now give the floor to the co-Chair of interactive dialogue 1, His Excellency Mr. Miro Cerar, Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia.

Mr. Cerar (co-Chair of interactive dialogue 1): I have the honour to present, on behalf of Mr. Ralph E. Gonsalves, Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and myself, the summary of deliberations from interactive dialogue 1, on ending poverty and hunger.

We noted that ending poverty is a matter of human dignity. The Millennium Development Goals were an important catalyst for the significant progress made in reducing poverty and hunger globally. However, that progress has been deeply uneven. Too many are still poor and undernourished, and poverty persists in every country. Eradicating poverty and hunger and leaving no one behind will require a multidimensional perspective that addresses their social, economic and environmental drivers. We must also tackle inequality and systemic and structural issues. Ending poverty and hunger can be achieved only by addressing interconnected factors such as inclusive growth, livelihoods and employment, access to basic infrastructure and services, food security, nutrition, health care, education, greater equality, improved agricultural productivity and the sustainable use of natural resources. We also highlight the important role of social protection schemes.

Economic growth is necessary but not sufficient if we are to accelerate the reduction of poverty and hunger. Future prosperity will also require that economic growth no longer degrades the environment. Climate change must be halted. We emphasize the importance of national ownership and political commitment, citizen engagement, effective fiscal policies, an integrated and coherent approach to policymaking, adequate resources, the monitoring of progress, and accountability and transparency. We also need increased participation in global decision-making by developing countries. There is a need for financing and investment from a range of actors, including national and regional development banks, the private sector and other institutional investors, such as pension funds and insurance companies. It is also important to raise additional resources through, for example, improved national tax systems and innovative financing sources.

Investing in the health and education of women and girls is crucial. Employment and inclusion for young people should receive priority attention. Marginalized groups should be included in decision-making processes. Peaceful and just societies are a necessary precondition for sustainable development. Many conflicts are driven by poverty, hunger and hopelessness. We noted that reversals in development gains could be avoided by building resilience to shocks and disasters and will require appropriate risk-management plans and strategies, together with strong social-protection frameworks. Lastly, we stressed the importance of strengthening the global partnership for development at both the national and international levels.

Co-Chair Museveni: I now give the floor to the co-Chair of interactive dialogue II, Her Excellency Ms. Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović, President of the Republic of Croatia.

President Grabar-Kitarović (co-Chair of interactive dialogue II): On behalf of President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya and myself, I have the honour to present the summary of deliberations from interactive dialogue II, on tackling inequalities, empowering women and girls and leaving no one behind.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) calls unprecedented attention to the need to reduce inequalities both within and among nations. Only by doing so can we build a world that is more just, stable and peaceful. We agreed that translating the Agenda's Goals and targets into national policies and programmes is a commitment that will mobilize us all for the next 15 years.

The 2030 Agenda is ambitious. It encompasses all human rights and aims to eliminate all forms of discrimination. We recognized that the Goals cannot be achieved unless progress includes everyone, especially women, who make up half of the world's population. Addressing gender equality is key and will have a multiplier effect in achieving all the Goals. While acknowledging the significant progress that has been made in advancing gender equality, our discussions highlighted some of the areas that will need further action.

First, universal access to quality education for girls must be reached through every means possible in the given time frame. Secondly, women must be given equal opportunities in the economic sphere, including at the workplace. Thirdly, we must ensure greater representation of women in political positions and leadership. Fourthly, violence against women must be eliminated and investments made in sexual and reproductive health.

We agreed that tackling inequalities requires not just changes in policies and laws but also strengthened capacities and empowerment at the community level. The most marginalized, including rural, indigenous, disabled and older people, must have equal opportunities and access to resources, and they must also be given a voice. A sustainable world should give every person a fair chance. The humanitarian crisis that the world is facing today, and particularly the situation of migrants and refugees, reminds us that we must prioritize the needs of the most vulnerable. We are all accountable for ensuring that the 2030 Agenda is taken forward. We need the right data, new technologies and broad partnerships. Above all, we need sustained political will if we are to reach our common objective of ensuring dignity and equal opportunities for all.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: I now give the floor to the co-Chair of interactive dialogue III, His Excellency Mr. Charles Michel, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Belgium.

Mr. Michel (co-Chair of interactive dialogue III) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, and myself, I have the honour to present the summary of deliberations from interactive dialogue III, on fostering viable economic growth and structural transformation and promoting sustainable modes of consumption and production.

Our discussions affirmed that prosperity has increased and many people have emerged from poverty. However, a great deal remains to be done, particularly for the world's most vulnerable. Continuing to reduce the scourge of poverty, tackling the structural causes of inequalities, increasing access to justice and respecting human rights are still major priorities. We also highlighted the fact that balanced, viable economic growth is essential to reducing poverty and ensuring sustainable development. We will have to pursue those goals despite the numerous current and future challenges facing the world.

We also recognize that growth without creating jobs, increased inequality of wealth, and unemployment among young people are concerns all over the world. Promoting decent jobs, workers' rights and developing social protections that include a minimum threshold would seem to be the keys to just and more inclusive societies. In order for our economies to be inclusive, we should also aim at achieving equality between women and men. Investing in women's health and education, eliminating sexual violence and promoting entrepreneurship for women are essential to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Structural and technological reforms to our economies are necessary to develop a system of international commerce in which exchanges are more technologically intensive and have greater value added and more productivity, and where there is full integration for everybody. Connectivity and access to the Internet, as well as the strengthening of institutions, are also keys to accelerate this transformation. Strengthening regional and international trade appears essential for sustainable development. Access to markets and to technology is fundamental for integration into the global economy. We must invest more, particularly in Africa, in such sectors as renewable energy, infrastructure and transport and agriculture. We also believe that domestic and foreign investment must be stimulated. In that regard, new partnerships between the private and public sectors should be better defined.

Finally, we must uncouple economic growth, on the one hand, and degradation of the environment, on the other, and combat climate change so that we can better protect future generations. We must accelerate a real transition to sustainable lifestyles, which requires that we change our consumption patterns and make better use of our precious resources.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the two Co-Chairs of this historic Summit. I would also like to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who during the entire process has been a driving force and a great inspiration to us all. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) is now adopted. We need to get down to work.

Co-Chair Museveni: I now give the floor to the co-Chair of interactive dialogue V, Her Excellency Ms. Michelle Bachelet Jeria, President of the Republic of Chile.

President Bachelet Jeria (co-Chair of interactive dialogue V): On behalf of Her Excellency Ms. Park Geun-hye, President of the Republic of Korea, and myself, I have the honour to present the summary of deliberations from interactive dialogue V, on "Building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions to achieve sustainable development".

There was a strong sentiment during the dialogue that effective, accountable and inclusive institutions that are transparent and free of corruption are essential prerequisites for our common vision for sustainable development. While Goal 16 is important in its own right, it facilitates and accelerates the success of all the other Goals.

We agreed that the increased involvement of citizens is needed in order to create full ownership of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). That can be achieved only through high-quality education, non-discrimination, gender equality and access to justice and information, as well as reliable and timely data, and it must include the most vulnerable and marginalized groups. It should uphold the highest standards of human rights and freedoms. The full engagement of citizens will also help to build a bridge between the poor and the rich, men and women, urban and rural constituencies and provide an enabling environment for all people. That will be essential in promoting integrity and building trust between Governments and citizens.

We acknowledge that strong institutions based on the rule of law are essential for building peaceful societies where people live free from fear and want. A culture of justice needs to be created and upheld to empower all people, including the most marginalized. A precondition for the implementation of Goal 16 and all other Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is the breaking down of silos through building partnership across sectors and among all stakeholders.

We concur that the SDGs must be integrated into national plans and strategies, supported by sound monitoring and review frameworks. The important role of Parliaments and local authorities needs to be recognized and enhanced. Partnerships and a stable environment provided through strong institutions are necessary for vibrant private-sector engagement and domestic and international resource mobilization. Full gender equality needs to be achieved and women's potential must be unlocked.

Young people are the prime beneficiaries of peaceful States and societies. Children and youth living in conflict are often the most immediate victims of violence and displacement. We owe it to them to create a peaceful, just and prosperous world.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Abdoulaye Balde, Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development of the Republic of Senegal and representative of the co-Chair of interactive dialogue VI.

Mr. Balde (co-Chair of interactive dialogue VI) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of Mr. Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal, and of Mr. Ahmet Davutoğlu, Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey, I have the honour to present the summary of interactive dialogue VI, entitled "Delivering on a revitalized global partnership".

The discussions on the topic of partnership took place in a friendly environment, with relevant recommendations regarding the following convergent points.

In noting that reaching the Sustainable Development Goals will depend on a revitalized global partnership, we agreed that it should be universal and relevant for all, while meeting the needs of the most vulnerable and in leaving no one behind. All the stakeholders must be committed, and the needs of present and future generations taken into account. We emphasized the need to mobilize financial resources — public and private, national and international — and technologies, as well as the need to strengthen capacity-building for sustainable development.

Official development assistance (ODA) remains critical, in particular for the poorest and most vulnerable countries. A major role will be played by the mobilization of national resources, the strengthening of international cooperation in fiscal matters and combating illicit financial flows, as well as by viable policies, private investment and effective partnerships. We called for immediate compliance with our commitments regarding ODA and in other areas. We also emphasized the importance of development cooperation that will be effective, predictable, country-specific and results-based.

We agreed that consistent policies with regard to financing, trade, debt and technology were necessary for sustainable development. We emphasized the importance of good governance and the rule of law, of a healthy environment and the fight against corruption, as well as independence for women and girls, without forgetting young people.

Mindful that we have to adapt the global objectives to the local level, we emphasized the need to take them into account in concrete national development plans, elaborated after open consultations with civil society, in order to guide national policies and international cooperation for development. The capacities of local stakeholders must be strengthened, and access to financial services broadened.

We also highlighted the contributions of regional institutions, which are a framework for exchanging experiences and know-how. We agreed on the need to establish innovate partnerships among Governments, business and civil society so as to benefit from all resources and skills available. We recognized that public policy and public finance can contribute to the mobilization of private investment favouring the Sustainable Development Goals. We also stressed the importance of accessible and transparent data to ensure the follow-up of progress, the assessment of policies and the accountability of all stakeholders. We emphasized the need to adopt innovative, effective and inclusive approaches for follow-up and evaluation. We must mobilize all stakeholders and create a space which is conducive to the participation of civil society, while encouraging mutual learning in our common activities in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals.

That is a summary of the main ideas that we thought we should present as conclusions or recommendations from our work.

Co-Chair Rasmussen: We will now move to the last brief presentation of the interactive dialogues. I would like to take the opportunity to thank all the co-Chairs for their great work.

I give the floor to the co-Chair of interactive dialogue IV, His Excellency Mr. Ollanta Humala Tasso, President of the Republic of Peru.

President Humala Tasso (co-Chair of interactive dialogue IV) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of His Excellency Mr. François Hollande, President of the French Republic, and on my own behalf, I have the honour to present a summary of deliberations that took place during interactive dialogue IV, entitled "Protecting our planet and combating climate change".

Climate change is one of our major challenges. The negative impacts of climate change are challenging development and the possibilities of progress in all areas of our economies and societies. In order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, we must ensure a high level of consistency between the responses to climate change and the eradication of poverty. We need integrated actions for the sustainable use of natural resources and the management of the biodiversity of our forests, land, mountains, oceans and seas. Only in that way will we be able to respond to the growing demand for food, water and energy. It is essential to ensure that women, indigenous peoples and other vulnerable groups have equitable access to land, forests and fisheries, among other things.

It is essential to ensure that we be able to limit the increase of the temperature to between 1.5°C and 2°C. The only way to limit the increase in temperature is through decarbonizing the economy. That must be a priority in those countries with the highest emissions of greenhouse gasses. Transition towards renewable energy sources is particularly important for improving efficiency in the way we use energy and natural resources.

We heard very clearly the magnitude of vulnerability to which developing countries are exposed — countries such as Peru, but primarily the small island developing States and the least developed countries. The losses incurred because of the increase in the frequency and violence of natural disasters have high costs for our populations and the economies of our countries. Adapting to climate change requires a greater international effort in the form of financial resources, the transfer of sustainable and clean technologies, and capacity-building. Greater international cooperation must be geared primarily towards the least developed countries and small island developing States. We must strengthen the contributions of all stakeholders, specifically the private sector, at all levels — the global, regional and national — and, as far as possible, establish a carbon price to guide investment decisions towards low-carbon economies.

Several countries reported that they had ambitious national plans to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions and to mitigate the impact of climate change. The presentation of those plans by all countries before the Paris Conference will be a good sign for the negotiations that we will conclude in the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties (COP21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in December in Paris. We have high expectations for the outcome of COP21. We were able to conclude that the general will is to reach a global, ambitious and legally binding agreement, with the goal of limiting the temperature increase to between 1.5°C and 2°C. That will be the acid test of our collective commitment as nations and societies towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

I believe that today humankind has before it an opportunity to build the biggest and most powerful partnership in the planet's history in the fight against climate change and rising temperatures.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.